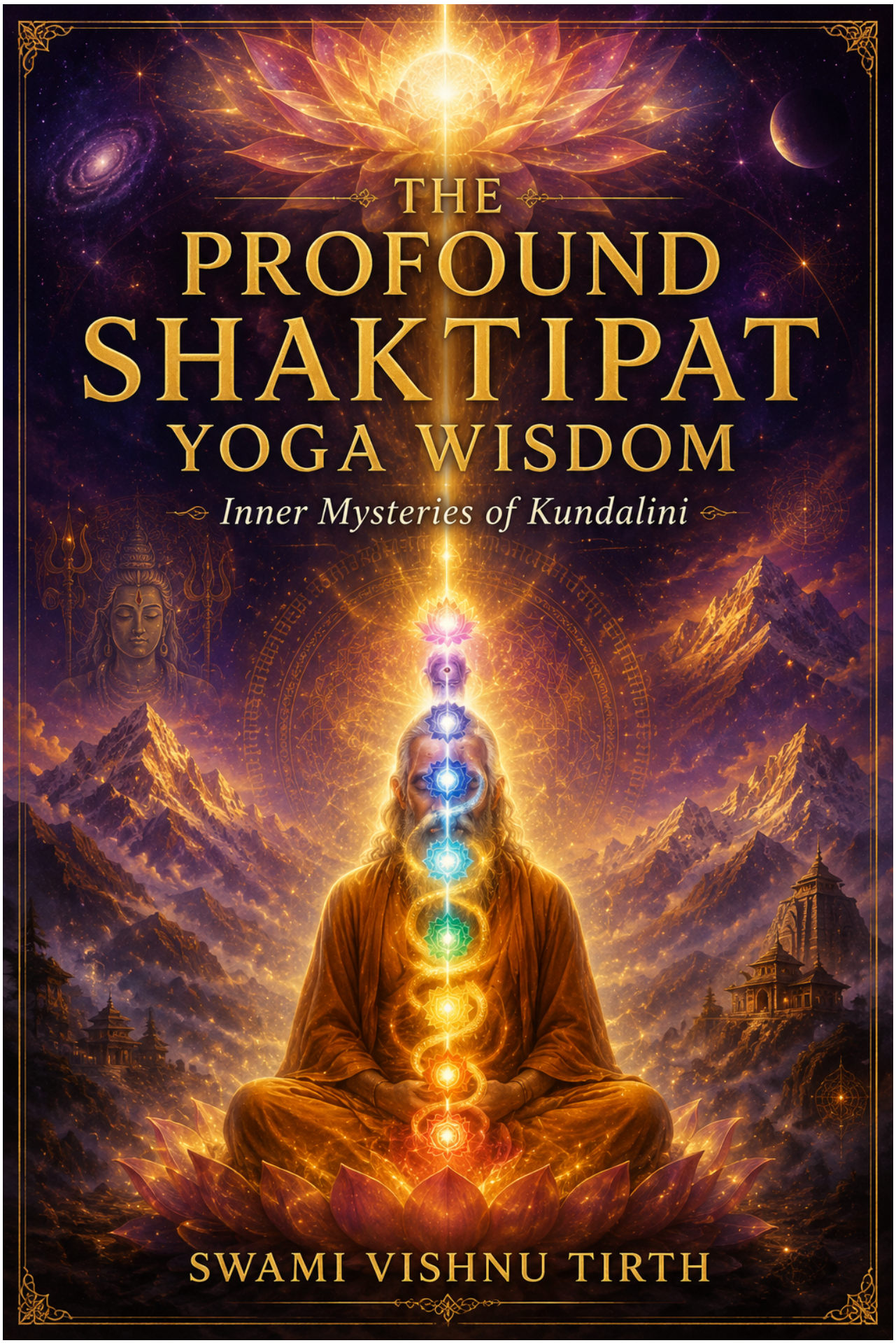
THE PROFOUND SHAKTIPAT YOGA WISDOM

INNER MYSTERIES OF KUNDALINI

SWAMI VISHNU TIRTH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Foreword

Nowadays, a general perception has formed that the practice of Yoga can only be performed by home-renouncing ascetics who engage in severe penances. However, no Indian is unaware of how our ancestors attained the highest realms of Yoga while fully fulfilling the duties of householder life (*Grihastha-Dharma*). The ideal life of Yogiraj Lord Krishna stands as absolute proof of this fact. Even while remaining in the householder stage of life, due to His divine and supernatural qualities and deeds, we have accepted Him as the living manifestation of *Brahman* (the Supreme Reality). Spiritual practice (*Sadhana*) performed while living a householder life brings welfare and benediction to both worlds (the material and the spiritual).

Although there is no objection to accepting that Yoga practice requires firm and constant endeavor, it is not just difficult, but nigh impossible to achieve that realization merely by reading the texts of ancient path-finders like Lord Patanjali, Vashistha, and Vedavyasa. This is because this path is fraught with numerous obstacles and temptations that obstruct the soul (*Jiva*) from reaching *Brahman*, causing the practitioner to go astray and depriving them of their ultimate goal—*Moksha* (liberation).

The only simple and effortless solution to this is the grace of a True Guru (*Sadguru*). Such True Gurus, motivated solely by altruism and public welfare, effortlessly bestow the benefits of 'Siddha-Mahayoga'—which easily grants spiritual perfection—upon seekers through their *Shaktipat* (descent of spiritual energy).

It must be well remembered that there is a vast, sky-to-underworld difference between *Shaktipat* and 'Mesmerism'. In mesmerism, the operator (the hypnotist or mesmerizer) renders the medium or subject (on whom the influence is cast) unconscious through his influence and makes them perform actions according to his own will. Such acts are performed solely for selfish motives, far removed from supreme benevolence, and as

soon as the operator's influence is removed, the medium falls below even their ordinary mental state. They begin to harbor hatred toward the mesmerizer and remain fearful of him. On the contrary, through *Shaktipat*, the Guru awakens and develops the inner soul-power (*Atmashakti*) of the disciple. As the disciple achieves all-round multi-dimensional evolution, their faith deepens, and in accordance with the maxim *'Shraddhavan Labhate Gyanam'* (the faithful attains knowledge), they acquire authentic spiritual knowledge.

Like a mirage, we are chasing modern Western material science. This will lead us toward the very destruction whose consequences the West is suffering today. If we wish to attain the bliss of the self (*Atmananda*), if we desire real happiness, if we want our all-around development, and if we must protect our nation, race, and culture, then we must once again fully dedicate ourselves to 'Yoga-Sadhana'. If there is a burning, intense yearning in the heart, there is no absolute dearth of True Gurus even today.

To clarify the science of this easily achievable *Shaktipat*, the highly compassionate Shri Pt. Munilal Ji Swami (Shri 108 Swami Vishnu Tirth Ji Maharaj) has written this book, rendering a supreme service to spiritual seekers.

First Quarter (Pratham Pada)

Shivam Gangadharam Tirtham Tirtham Narayanam Prabhum |

Yoganandaham Vande, Shaktipatasya Deshikan ||

Shanti-Path (Peace Invocation)

Om Purnamadah Purnamidam Purnat Purnamudacyate |

Purnasya Purnamadaya Purnamevavashisyate ||

Om Shantih! Shantih!! Shantih!!!

SHAKTIPAT IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURES

Shaktipat is a spiritual process through which a Guru transmits his own energy into a disciple, thereby awakening the disciple's inner spiritual power. There is a vast difference between spiritual power (*Adhyatmik Shakti*) and material/physical power (*Adhibhautik Shakti*); therefore, it is natural that the science of spiritual power is distinct from the science of physical energies. Spiritual power cannot be demonstrated or measured through material instruments. Consequently, this science has remained largely hidden and secret until now. Even those who possess its experiential knowledge experience it only within their own conscious bodies and remain blissfully absorbed in its divine ecstasy. For this reason, or because the said science is extraordinarily subtle, those who fail to understand it consider it sufficient to rest satisfied merely with descriptions of the experiences resulting from it. However, the modern era, heavily influenced by the research methodologies of Western material scientists, does not consider it sufficient to stop at mere descriptions.

There is no doubt that to investigate the subtlest principles of the physical sciences, Western scholars spend millions of rupees to construct expensive instruments, attempting to prove highly subtle phenomena through them

and confirming them with the help of mathematics. However, to acquire spiritual science (*Adhyatma-Vidya*), no external instrument is required. The living human body created by the Supreme Lord serves as both the instrument and the laboratory. It is possible that the scholars of future generations may discover the laws of spiritual energy just like physical laws and bind them into mathematical formulas; however, today all this appears close to impossible.

In the Patanjali Yoga Darshan and other scriptures of Yoga, which serve as the treasuries of the wealth of knowledge left behind by our seers, the ultimate goal of spiritual elevation is stated to be *Moksha* (liberation), alongside descriptions of certain material or psychic perfections (*Siddhis*). In the *Vibhuti Pada* of Patanjali's Yoga Darshan, methods to attain certain high-level perfections are recorded. Looking at them from a scientific perspective reveals that a very profound scientific secret is hidden within each and every aphorism (*Sutra*). However, to comprehend it, the practice of entering into *Samadhi* (meditative absorption) is an indispensable prerequisite.

In this book, we are merely making an attempt to contemplate questions regarding the spiritual power that a Guru transmits into his disciples through *Shaktipat*: What and of what nature is this power? What is its true form? Where and how does it originate? How is it transmitted or cast into a disciple? How does it move inside and outside the body? What does it do upon entering the disciple's body? How does its development manifest in the body and mind, and what kinds of experiences does a human undergo? What is the cause behind the evolution of those experiences, and what is the ultimate consequence of all this? We address these questions so that the attention of practitioners and other scholars may be drawn toward this science.

Whether the exploration of material and spiritual sciences gives equal joy to their seekers, and whether the advancement of physical science elevates material progress to the highest peak of the world, it is certain that material progress is also heavily misused. Certain selfish people or nations, who spend millions of rupees to aid scientific scholars for the advancement of physical sciences, do not utilize the fruits of their labor for the benefit of public society, but rather to fulfill their own selfish agendas. One disastrous consequence of these scientific advancements can even be the

fierce, cataclysmic destruction of the world. The prevalent modern poverty and various types of miseries are also caused solely by the misuse of the aforementioned sciences.

We are passing through an era in which human beings, due to their flaws and limitations, use the attainments of these physical sciences more for public harm than for good. It is possible that future generations may leverage the hard work of their ancestors to benefit the world; however, in spiritual elevation, there is absolutely no room for such apprehension.

The goal of spiritual practices is *Moksha* (liberation), while the goal of material science is *Bhoga* (enjoyment/consumption). The mental modifications (*Chittavritti*) of both the seeker of physical science and the practitioner who achieves perfections through external yogic efforts remain outward-turned (*Bahirmukha*), which only increases attachment to material objects. Until detachment (*Vairagya*) arises toward both earthly and otherworldly pleasures, talking about *Moksha* is completely futile. Therefore, for true spirituality, it is absolutely mandatory to make the mental modifications completely inward-turned (*Antarmukha*) through cessation (*Nirodha*). In every perception, a triad (*Triputi*) of the knower (*Gnata*), knowledge (*Gyan*), and the object of knowledge (*Gneya*) exists. As long as the worldly objects of any search—whether real or imaginary—persist, the object of that knowledge remains present on the canvas of the mind in the form of an outward modification. The knower considers himself separate from the object known. The moment all modifications are ceased from the mind—that is, when there is an absence of objects of knowledge—then only knowledge and the knower remain. However, since knowledge is the very nature of the knower, the 'knower-ship' of the knower also ceases to be, and stabilization in the Self occurs. The attainment of this state is called the ultimate goal of spiritual science. The principle of the Self (*Atma-Tattva*) is unattached and immutable:

Nityashuddhabuddhamuktasvabhavoyam-Atma.

This *Atman* by nature is eternal, pure, enlightened, and free. It never undergoes bondage, nor is bondage ever possible for it. Then who is in bondage? "The one who possesses the ego-modification (*Aham-Vritti*) of being bound"—that is, the one who says 'I am in bondage'—is the one in

bondage. Therefore, it is necessary to explain what this feeling of 'Aham' or 'I' actually is. If we compare the mind (*Chitta*) to a cinema screen, we can understand it like this: because the mind is illuminated by the conscious light of knowledge belonging to the *Atman*, the modification of egoism (*Ahanta*) awakens within the mind. Although the *Atman* or its light of knowledge does not turn into the insentient mind, nor can the mind become the *Atman*, an apparent identity or oneness (*Tadatmya*) begins to manifest between the two. This is the false knot between the insentient and the sentient (*Jada-Chetan*):

Jada Chetanahi Granthi Pari Gai, Jadapi Mrisha Chhutat Kathinai.

(A knot has formed between the insentient and the sentient; though false, it is extremely difficult to untie.)

This 'Aham' modification expands with the expansion of the mind, contracts with its contraction, and remains enclosed within the boundaries of the mind, just like light on a cinema screen. Therefore, the *Atman* also appears as if bound within the limitations of the mind's attributes (*Upadhis*). Generally, for a living being trapped in bondage, it is appropriate to say '*Chittam-Atma*'—meaning 'the mind itself is the Soul'.

Because the mind is atomic or subtle in form (*Anurupa*), an illusion of being atomic also appears in the *Atman*. When a living being desperate for power and liberation begins to search for spiritual means, he seeks self-welfare through effort-intensive and austerity-driven means: chanting of mantras (*Japa*), purificatory rituals (*Purashcharana*), performances of sacrifices (*Yagna*), practice of the limbs of Ashtanga Yoga and Hatha Yoga, or the rituals prescribed by various teachers of the path of devotion (*Bhakti-Marga*). All such effort-driven attempts that rely entirely on the limited intellect of a human being are termed **Anavopaya** (the atomic or individual means).

When, after being 'cultivated uninterruptedly over a long period with deep reverence' (*Dirghakala Nairantarya Satkara Sevito Dridhabhumih*), the practitioner becomes free from ego, brute force, pride, lust, anger, etc., and attains the state of *Brahman* (*Brahma-bhava*), he truly ascends the path of supreme welfare. Then his entire life journey becomes self-accomplished and dependent on the Divine:

Ahankaram Balam Darpam Kamam Krodham Parigraham |

Vimuchya Nirmamah Shanto Brahmabhuyaya Kalpate ||

Brahmabhutah Prasannatma Na Shochati Na Kankshati |

— Gita, 18-53

In this state, the practitioner transitions from *Anavopaya* to **Shambhavopaya** (the divine means of Shiva). His ego-consciousness rises from the individual atomic state of the mind and ascends into the divine absorption of Shiva (*Shambhavavesha*). There is yet another means to reach this state of Shambhavi, which is known as **Shaktopay** (the energy means). The Supreme Lord resides in the heart of everyone, and along with Him sits His Supreme Power (*Para Shakti*):

Para'sya Shaktirvividhaiva Shruyate, Swabhaviki Gyana Bala Kriya Cha |— Shvetashvatara Upanishad, 6-8

His Supreme Power is heard of in various names, which is innate and possesses the nature of knowledge (*Gyana*), strength (*Bala*), and action (*Kriya*). But that Supreme Divine Power is in a dormant, sleeping state within ordinary human beings; this is why no one truly knows the Lord residing within their own heart. When that power is awakened through *Shaktipat*, which is the grace of an empowered Guru, all practices (*Sadhanas*) begin to happen spontaneously, and the presence of God begins to manifest in one's actions:

Jake Hridaya Narayana Pragate, So Kuchh Karma Kare Na Kare |

Prata Samaya Ravi Udaya Hua, Tab Dipaka Jyoti Jare Na Jare ||

(In whose heart the Divine manifests, it matters little whether he performs rituals or not; when the morning sun has risen, it matters not whether the lamp's flame burns or fades.)

Now, for the benefit of seekers of spiritual science, we explain the science of this principal means of spiritual elevation—*Shaktipat*.

1. Athatah Shaktipatam Vyakhyasyamah |

From here on, we shall explain and expound upon Shaktipat.

The word 'Atha' is used for the sake of auspiciousness. As it is said:

Omkarashchatha Shabdashcha Dvavetau Brahmana Pura |

Kantham Bhittva Viniryatau Tasmat Mangalikavubhau ||

("The sounds 'Om' and 'Atha' both emerged from the throat of Brahma in the beginning; therefore, both are highly auspicious words.")

Here, the word 'Atha' is used in the sense of immediate succession or commencement (*Anantarya*). Although to receive the initiation of *Shaktipat*, no compulsory preparatory practice or study of scriptures is mandatory. It can be attained by whomever the Guru chooses to bestow his grace upon, whether the disciple is a scholar of scriptures or completely uneducated, and whether he has practiced yogic disciplines or not. Without requiring any prior preparatory practice, the awakening of the disciple's energy is achieved solely by the grace of the Guru in the form of *Shaktipat*.

The purpose of explaining the science of *Shaktipat* here is to clarify that this is not an independent science that disregards the ancient masters, unlike modern physical sciences. *Shaktipat* is a means through which, by the grace of the Guru, the intense absorption (*Avesha*) of Hatha Yoga, devotion (*Bhakti*), and the knowledge of the oneness of *Brahman* and *Atman* can be suddenly awakened in an eligible disciple. Sage Patanjali has prescribed eight limbs for the cessation of mental modifications, and within those eight limbs, all methods of *Vritti-Nirodha* are included. Accordingly, this method also falls within those eight limbs, as will be demonstrated later. From this perspective, like the Patanjali Yoga Darshan, the use of the word 'Atha' here can be understood in the sense of a subject matter under consideration (*Adhikarana*). However, it is not entirely unconditional, because to become eligible for *Shaktipat* initiation, the cultivation of past virtuous deeds or various practices for the purification

of the internal instrument (*Antahkarana-Shuddhi*) is required (see Sutras 2 and 4).

The eight means for the cessation of mental modifications (*Chittavritti-Nirodha*) stated in Patanjali Yoga Darshan are:

1. **Abhyasa Vairagyabhyam Tannirodhah** – Their cessation is brought about through practice and detachment. These two are counted above all, because no practice can be sustained without dedication, and to keep the practice firm, a continuous flow of detachment from worldly objects, heavenly pleasures, or the temptations of yogic perfections is always essential. Detachment does not mean the literal abandonment of enjoyments, because birth occurs precisely to experience joys and sorrows. By detachment, one must mean non-attachment (*Anasakti*). Those human beings who, becoming free from attraction and aversion, enjoy all worldly objects in a righteous manner are indeed detached.

2. **Ishvara Pranidhanadva** – Or, the cessation of modifications is achieved through surrender to the Lord. *Ishvara-Pranidhan* should be understood as offering everything to God or taking total refuge in God. Supreme love-filled devotion (*Para-Bhakti*) can also be considered a part of this, because the feeling of oneness and exclusivity is deeply embedded in surrender or taking refuge.
   A specific meaning also resonates from the word 'Pranidhan'. Pra + Ni + Dhan. derived from the root 'Dha' with the suffix 'Lyut'. The root 'Dha' means 'to hold or bear'. God resides within the heart of every living being. Although He remains unmanifest, He manifests through *Shaktipat* in the hearts of faithful devotees and, becoming perceived directly, grants His own equality to the practitioner.
   Yada Pashyah Pashyate Rukmavarnam Kartaramisham Purusham Brahmayonim |
   Tada Vidvan Punyapape Vidhuya Niranjanah Paramam Samyatamupaiti ||
   — Mundaka Upanishad

   In the Patanjali Yoga Darshan, God is defined as a special Purusha (*Purusha-Vishesha*) who is untouched by the limitations of individual life (*Jivabhava*), who is the seed of omniscience, and who is the

Guru of even the ancient ancestors. This implies that this special Purusha-like Guru, who is beyond the reach of the mind and intellect, is realized directly within one's own body in the form of conscious power, through the gradual development of the seed of omniscience. This sequence of development has been termed 'Kriya-Yoga' in Sutra 2.1, the fruit of which is stated to be the thinning of afflictions (*Kleshas*) and the facilitation of *Samadhi*. Then, as ignorance (*Avidya*) faces destruction, there remains no need for Ashtanga Yoga or any other labor-intensive practices.
'Samadhisiddhirishvara Pranidhanat |'

3. **Prachchhardana Vidharanabhyam Va Pranasya** – Or, cessation is achieved through the exhalation and retention of the breath (*Prana*).

4. **Visayavati Va Pravrttirutpanna Manasah Sthiti Nibandhini** – Or, the cessation of mental modifications is also achieved when an extraordinary sensory perception arises (such as divine smell, divine taste, divine sight, divine touch, and divine sound) which serves to bind and stabilize the mind, because the mind naturally finds detachment from mundane worldly objects and the senses begin to turn inward.

5. **Vishoka Va Jyotishmati** – Or, modifications are ceased by experiencing the sorrowless, luminous inner light (*Jyoti*).

6. **Vitaraga Visayam Va Chittam** – Or, by taking as an anchor a mind that has become free from passions and attachments through spiritual fulfillment. Here, the advice is to take the support of the mind of such enlightened Gurus who have freed themselves from attraction and aversion. How can one take support of their mind? This is worth contemplating. Many hold the view that by meditating upon or merely remembering their photographs, etc., the anchor of their mind is attained. This is not completely baseless, for it has been observed through experience that meditating upon or remembering such highly evolved souls brings benefit. However, a sufficient and desired benefit is not guaranteed to everyone in this manner. The second method, through which the actual anchor of their mind is attained, is **Shaktipat**, because *Shaktipat* occurs solely through the grace of

Gurus who are free from attachments (*Vitaraga*). Complete benefits are obtained through this.

7. **Svapna Nidra Gyanalambanam Va** – Or, by taking as a support the knowledge gained during dreams and deep sleep. One unique feature of the knowledge of dreams and deep sleep is that the bodily ego of the waking state does not exist during those times. In dreams, an imaginary bodily ego takes its place. Therefore, by bringing a dream-like state into waking awareness, control over bodily identification can be gained. In both states, the senses, mind, intellect, and memory of the waking state dissolve into their respective causal origins. In deep sleep (*Sushupti*), only the life force (*Prana*) functions. In dreams, the impressions of the storehouse of subliminal impressions (*Samskarashaya*) keep rising and setting. Deep sleep should be understood as the unmanifest condition of nature (*Prakriti*) and the causal body (*Karana Sharira*), where all three gunas remain in a state of equilibrium, and the living being under the influence of ignorance does not abide in its true nature. Deep sleep is also called a modification (*Vritti*) of the mind. Due to identifying with the mind, the soul remains in bondage through this modification just like any other modification. Therefore, when deep sleep is also ceased, the witness (*Drashta*) abides in its true nature within *Samadhi*.

8. **Yathabhimatadhyanadva** – Or, by meditating on whatever object or form one finds pleasing, the cessation of mental modifications is accomplished. In every type of spiritual practice, a cheerful and pleasant state of mind is absolutely essential. Therefore, the remedy and instruction to keep the mind always cheerful have been given side by side: cultivating friendliness toward the happy, compassion toward the miserable, joy toward the virtuous, and indifference toward the sinful brings spiritual grace and clarity (*Prasada*) to the mind.

Although all the above-mentioned practices occur spontaneously through *Shaktipat*, this science is specifically and specially connected to '*Vitaraga Visayam Va Chittam*'.

Through *Shaktipat*, not only are the divine absorptions of Yoga and devotion awakened, but the knowledge of *Brahman* is also attained strictly through *Shaktipat* initiation, and not otherwise. As it is said:

Tattva Gyanena Mayaya Badho Nanyena Karmana |

Gyanam Vedantavakyottham Brahmatmaikatva Gocharam ||

Tachcha Deva Prasadena Guroh Sakshannirikshanat |

Jayate Shaktipatena Vakyadeva Dhikarinam ||

— Brahmanika

("The sublation of Maya happens through the knowledge of Reality, not by any other action. The knowledge that reveals the oneness of Brahman and the Soul arises from the sentences of Vedanta. And that knowledge dawns upon eligible seekers through Shaktipat via the initiation of the Great Sentence (*Mahavakya*) by the grace of God and the direct oversight of the Guru.")

What is the nature of the energy mentioned in the first Sutra? Is it similar to electricity, etc., generated from physical nature, or is it different? The answer to this doubt is provided below.

2. Shaktiratmanah Shruteh |

That power is from the Soul itself, as verified by the Shruti (Vedas).

Descriptions of this power are found in various places across the Vedas. Here, we specifically cite the clear description given in the Atharva Veda Samhita, Eleventh Kanda, Eighth Sukta, Mantras 16 and 17:

Yattachchharire Mashayat Sandhaya Sahitam Mahat |

Yenedamadhya Rocheta Ko Asmin Varnamabharat ||

Sarve Deva Upashikshan Tada Janad Vadhu Sati |

Isha Vashasya Ya Jaya Sasmin Varnamabharat ||

("This vast body, though joined together by the binding energy named 'Sandha', was lying motionless. 'By virtue of whom does it now look

beautiful? Who is the one who has infused light and color into it?' The deities prayed to know this. Then that sustaining, virtuous bride (*Sati*) revealed that the divine power (*Ishvari*) of the Supreme Lord, who is His consort/wife, has infused color, which is the light of consciousness, into this body.")

Power is observed to be generated in two ways:

1. Through mechanical instruments, such as the power of a railway engine created by steam pressure, or electricity generated from instruments like a battery or dynamo.

2. Power generated from the physical strength of humans or animals. The work performed by machines can also be done on a smaller scale by the physical strength of animals like oxen, buffaloes, horses, or by humans, and the outcome of both appears identical. Is the power mentioned in *Shaktipat* also of this same nature? Although the power generated from the physical strength of humans and animals actually originates from the soul, or the soul is its ultimate cause, its execution is insentient like the forces generated by inanimate machines. Therefore, no difference appears between the two; both operate in an insentient manner. The resolution to this doubt is given next.

3. Chitirva |

Or, it is the force of Consciousness (Chiti-Shakti) itself.

By 'Chiti', it is meant that the consciousness-force is a sentient power, not an insentient one.

Brahman is of the nature of Truth, Consciousness, and Bliss (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*). In the five elemental, gross, insentient matters, the *Sat* (existence) power is predominant, while in the fourfold inner instrument (*Antahkarana*) and the senses, the *Chit* (consciousness) aspect is predominant. The *Chit* power is also called *Chiti*. The gross, atomic, modified form of the *Sat-Chit* power is called the mind (*Chitta*), and the reflection of the Soul's light upon it is called consciousness (*Chetana*). This *Sat-Chit* power itself has been called *Prakriti* (Nature). Among the three gunas of Prakriti, Tamogun is dominant in the *Sat* aspect, and

Sattvagun is dominant in the *Chit* aspect. Rajogun, being of the nature of action, functions on both sides.

4. Gyanavati Cha ।

And it possesses the nature of Knowledge (Gyanavati) as well.

5. Prano Va Shruteh ।

Or, it is also called Prana, as verified by the Shruti.

The Vedas, across the Samhitari, Brahmanas, and Upanishads, have everywhere ordained the worship and meditation of *Prana*, describing its nature, location, and origin repeatedly. The *Prana* mentioned in the Vedas is an entity entirely different from physical inhalation and exhalation. Even though it originates from the Soul, it embodies the manifest form of the power of the *Atman* or *Brahman*, as is evident from the Shrutis cited below. The *Atman* is immutable and changeless; it is His manifested power alone that transforms and assumes the form of the universe. The manifestation of the Soul is spoken of in conjunction with its power.

Atmanah Esha Prano Jayate, Manodhritenayatyasmin Sharire ।

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-3

("From the Soul, this Prana is born; it enters this body with the support of the mind.")

Etasmat Jayate Pranah ।

— Mundaka Upanishad, 2-1-3

("From Him (Brahman), Prana is born.")

Sarvani Ha Va Imani Bhutani Pranamevabhisamvishanti Pranam-Abhyujjihate ।

— Chandogya Upanishad, 1-11-5

("Assuredly, all these created beings dissolve back into Prana alone and originate from Prana alone.")

Ya Pranena Sambhavatyaditi Devatamayi ।

Guham Pravishya Tishthanti Ya Bhutebhirvyajayata, Etadvai Tat ||

— Katha Upanishad, 4-7

("That divine power 'Aditi', who arises along with Prana, entering into the cave-like space of the heart, abides there and manifests through the elements—this truly is that Brahman.")

Pranabandhanam Hi Saumya Manah |

— Chandogya Upanishad, 6-8-2

("O gentle one! Assuredly, the mind is bound to Prana.")

Sa Esha Prana Eva Pragyatmanandojaro'mritah |

— Kaushitaki Brahmana Upanishad, 3-8

("That very Prana is the conscious Self, bliss, ageless, and immortal.")

In the Brahma Sutras, it is stated via Sutra 1.1.23 ('*Ataeva Pranah*') that this *Prana* is not the ordinary atmospheric air moving as inhalation and exhalation, but is *Brahman* itself.

By *Atman*, one must mean the pure-natured Soul or *Brahman* itself. One can call it the pure Soul within the microcosm (*Pinda*) and *Brahman* within the macrocosm (*Brahmanda*), or simply *Brahman* in both places. Those who do not accept the absolute identity of the individual soul and *Brahman* should interpret *Atman* not as the bound individual ego (*Jiva*) filled with attributes, but as the Inner Controller (*Antaryami Paramatma*), because the power of the Supreme Lord alone can bring about the means for *Moksha*.

Power is neither different from the possessor of power (*Shaktiman*), nor is it a separate entity apart from Him. We observe two forms of power: physical and conscious. An infinite reservoir of energy is visible within Nature to run all its operations. So much energy is packed inside each and every atom of earth, water, air, and space that the intellect of modern scientists has remained incapable of measuring its full magnitude. The generation and dissolution of infinite energy are witnessed in the ordinary operations of Nature. In an ordinary clap of thunder in the clouds, so much electrical energy is generated and dissolved that even the massive power

stations cannot produce it. The explosion of atomic weapons is proof of this. The same holds true for conscious power. Look at how much power is expended by animals like elephants and lions!

Who is the master (*Shaktiman*) of both types of conscious and insentient powers? If we accept God as omnipotent, then it is not inappropriate to accept that whatever activities occur in the universe of matter and consciousness are all operations of the power of that supreme *Shaktiman*. If this is accepted, should these forces that direct Nature be understood as the *Shaktiman* itself, or is the *Shaktiman* distinct from its power? To clarify the answer to this, we consider an example.

For a moment, let us assume that human power is simply the power of the individual soul residing in the body, separate from the Omnipotent Lord. We see that human strength keeps fluctuating—becoming less or more—based on the stages of childhood, youth, old age, health, and sickness. Does the Soul, which generates this power, itself become possessing of less or more power at times? Furthermore, that very same Soul leaves behind the bodies of insects, etc., from past births to assume the bodies of animals and humans. So does the power of the Soul change? If this is accepted, then the Soul will have to be considered mutable and effort-driven. But this contradicts the core scriptural tenets.

Therefore, it is proven that the Soul, which is intrinsically unattached, appears to possess less or more power solely due to the limiting attributes (*Upadhis*) of the body, mind, intellect, and ego. A child's body has less strength, while youth has more. The cause of this is not a mutation in the Soul, but a mutation in the body-upadhi. A human being cannot fully fathom their own strength, and through courage, patience, and faith, they can increase their strength. This proves that despite the Soul being immutable, it keeps manifesting the expressions of power into the bodily attributes through the medium of the ego. In reality, the Soul remains inactive despite being infinitely powerful, and its power remains eternally unmanifest and uniform within it; however, due to its light, the expression of power keeps happening within the bodily attributes.

The Soul is like a magnet stone, within whose magnetic field pieces of iron keep expressing its magnetic force. But the power dancing in an unmanifest form within its field and in a manifest form within the pieces of

iron is one and the same. In the exact same manner, one must understand the Omnipotent *Brahman* and all the insentient and conscious powers of Nature.

According to the philosophy of Samkhya, earth, water, fire, air, space, the 5 subtle elements (*Tanmatras*), the 5 senses of knowledge (*Gyanendriyas*), mind, ego (*Ahankara*), the great principle (*Mahat-Tattva*), and the unmanifest (*Avyakta*) comprise the 24 elements of Nature. All these keep expressing insentient and conscious power solely due to the power of the Supreme Lord. In the first five elements, the manifestation of power is insentient-like, and in the remaining 18 elements, it is conscious-like. In the unmanifest (*Avyakta*), power remains dormant like a seed (Potential). The other elements are its active forms (Kinetic). The unmanifest form is potential Nature. *Mahat*, *Ahankara*, and the five subtle elements—these seven are partially potential and partially kinetic (*Prakriti-Vikriti*). The mind, the five senses of knowledge, the five senses of action, and the five gross elements—these 16 are purely kinetic (*Vikriti*). The *Purusha* (Soul) is neither potential nor kinetic (*Na Prakriti Na Vikriti*).

Therefore, power is indeed *Brahman*, and the intent of the aforementioned Shrutis is that *Brahman* itself is *Prana*. Although five active forms of *Prana* appear within the body—*Prana, Apana, Samana, Vyana,* and *Udana*—and externally, the solar energy is *Prana*, the earth's gravitational force is *Apana*, the space (Ether) is *Samana*, the wind is *Vyana*, and the fire is *Udana*. The magnetic field of the *Brahman*-magnet is called *Prana*. It is the cause behind the manifestation of multi-formed conscious and insentient power based on the attributes. But the magnet and the magnetic field appear separate only because one is gross and the other is subtle. *Brahman*, being all-pervading, is Himself the magnetic field of the nature of Truth-Consciousness-Bliss. No mutation ever occurs in Him; He remains eternally unmanifest and peaceful. He never assumes a potential form, nor a kinetic one. *Prakriti* is His *Maya* (illusion). The power that expresses itself through the medium of the five gross elements is what we call insentient/gross energy. The power that manifests through the senses, mind, intellect, and ego is called conscious energy. However, the power that manifests through the *Mahat-Tattva* and the ego generated from it is the authentic spiritual power, which is utilized in *Shaktipat*. As it is said:

Yadidang Kincha Jagatsarvang Prana Ejati Nihsritam |

— Katha Upanishad

("Whatever this entire universe is, it is merely the vibration of Prana emerged from Brahman.")

6. Saiva Kundalini |

That very power is Kundalini.

In human beings, the said spiritual power is called *Kundalini*. The shape of *Kundalini* is considered serpentine. *Shesha*, who holds the universe, is also depicted as serpentine. Therefore, that power which sustains both the macrocosm and the microcosm is one and the same.

Kundalyeva Bhavachchhaktisthang Tu Sanchalayet Budhah |

Svasthanadadha Dhruvormadhyang Shaktichalanambhuchyate ||

— Yoga Kundalya Upanishad

("Kundalini alone is the power; let the wise one manipulate and move it from its station, the Muladhara, up to the space between the eyebrows. This is called Shaktichalana.")

Gyeya Shaktiriyang Vishnor-Nirbhaya Svarnabhasvara |

Satvang Rajastamashcheti Gunatraya Prasutika ||

Maha Kundalini Prokta Parabrahma Svarupini |

Jiva Shakti Kundalakha Pranakara Atha Tejaso ||

("This power should be known as the fearless, golden-luminous power of Vishnu, the progenitor of the three gunas—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. This power, whose true nature is Parabrahman, is called Maha Kundalini. This very power is the individual soul-force (*Jivashakti*). She is coiled, shaped like Prana, and filled with brilliant splendor.")

Power generated by machines gets exhausted after performing work, but infinite power cannot be exhausted. Even after performing infinite work, it remains infinite. That remaining power is called 'Shesha' (the cosmic

anchor) in the Puranas and 'Uchchhishta (the supreme remnant) Brahman' in the Atharva Veda. In the individual microcosm, after the creation of the bodies of living beings, the remnant power that anchors the body is called *Kundalini*. Both are considered serpentine in form. The meaning of *Kundalini* itself is 'a female serpent coiled up'.

Movement of power (*Shakti-chalana*) begins that very moment through *Shaktipat*. In the first Sutra, the word 'Shaktipat' has been used, not just 'Shakti'; meaning, there is a pledge to explain its descent (*Pat*), not merely the science of energy. Therefore, a doubt arises: upon whom does the descent of this power occur? The answer is given in the next Sutra.

7. Tatpatah Shishyesu |

The descent of that power happens upon the disciples.

By stating 'disciples' in the Sutra, it is clear that Gurus cast this spiritual power into their disciples. The Guru-disciple relationship indicates that the Guru wishes to elevate the disciple through his knowledge. Therefore, this internal meaning also emerges clearly from this Sutra: *Shaktipat* is performed solely for the welfare of the disciples. Just as a worldly teacher imparts education for the mental growth of students, *Shaktipat* is performed for spiritual elevation.

8. Tatah Shaktyudbodhanam |

From that, the awakening of energy occurs.

That is, through the descent of power by the Guru, the disciple's own energy awakens. This implies that the spiritual power of every human being is lying asleep. Upon being awakened, its true nature begins to be experienced. Awakening the power of the disciple is itself called 'Shaktipat', as is stated in the *Shakti Rahasya*:

Vyapini Perama Shakti Patitetyuchyate Katham?

Urdhvadadhogatih Pato Murtasyasarvagatasya Cha ||

Satyam Sa Vyapini Nitya Sahaja Shivavat Sthita |

Kinthviyang Malakarmadi Pashabaddhesu Samvrita |

Pakvadosesu Suvyakta Patitetyupacharyate ||

("That Supreme Power is all-pervading. Then why is it said to be 'Patita'—meaning 'it falls'? Descent or fall from above to below can only be said of an object that is localized, embodied, and not all-pervading. True, She is all-pervading, eternal, and abides naturally like Shiva, but remains veiled within those bound by the fetters of past actions and impurities. When the flaws and impurities ripen and drop away, She becomes beautifully manifest; then She is metaphorically spoken of as 'Patita' (descended via Shaktipat).")

9. Pranotthanam Va ।

Or, it can be said that the rising of Prana takes place.

The life-force power (*Prana-Shakti*), which is sustaining the mind, intellect, senses, and body of a human being, begins to move upward (*Urdhvagami*) once the energy is awakened.

10. Tato Mahayogasiddhih ।

From that (awakening of energy), the perfection of Mahayoga is achieved.

11. Yogah Samadhirati Bhagavan Vedavyasah ।

"Yoga is Samadhi itself"—so has been stated by Lord Vedavyasa.

Samadhi is of two types: *Sampragyata* (cognitive) and *Asampragyata* (beyond cognition). The *Samadhi* in which high wisdom (*Pragya*) remains intact is *Sampragyata*, and when wisdom is completely ceased, it is called *Asampragyata Samadhi*. *Sampragyata* is also called 'Sabeeja' (with seed) and *Asampragyata* is called 'Nirbeeja' (seedless) *Samadhi*. There are six sub-divisions of *Sampragyata*: *Savitarka, Nirvitarka, Savichara, Nirvichara, Sananda,* and *Sasmita*.

12. Chittavrttinirodhah Iti Bhagavan Patanjalih ।

"The cessation of the modifications of the mind is called Yoga"—such is the opinion of Lord Patanjali.

The aphorism of Patanjali Yoga Darshan states: '*Yogashchittavritti Nirodhah*'—meaning, the cessation of the modifications of the mind is called Yoga.

In the said Sutra, no specific adjective has been appended before the word 'Nirodh' to specify how much or what kind of cessation is called Yoga. Therefore, a partial cessation can also be called Yoga, and total cessation is also called Yoga. He has prescribed eight limbs of Yoga practice: *Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana,* and *Samadhi*. This means that the cessation of modifications begins to happen to some extent from *Yama* itself, and total cessation occurs in *Nirbeeja Samadhi*. The mind remains possessed of the three gunas: Tamas (Inertia), Rajas (Motion), and Sattva (Light). One of these remains dominant while suppressing the remaining two. Due to Tamogun, the mind is *Mudha* (stupefied); due to Rajogun, it is *Kshipta* (restless); due to Raja-Sattva, it is *Vikshipta* (distracted); due to Sattva, it is *Ekagra* (one-pointed); and through the varying degrees of cessation of all three, different stages of the *Niruddha* (ceased) state arrive. One-pointed and ceased states occur only to Yogis, not to ordinary people.

Modifications are of five types, which can be coupled with the five afflictions (*Kleshas*)—ignorance (*Avidya*), egoism (*Asmita*), attachment (*Raga*), aversion (*Dvesha*), and fear of death (*Abhinivesha*)—or can be free from them. Entertaining the feeling of eternity in the ephemeral, purity in the impure, pleasure in pain, and Self in non-Self items is **Avidya**. The feeling of 'I am' is **Asmita**. Attachment to sensory objects is **Raga**, and hatred/repulsion is **Dvesha**. The deep-rooted desire to live forever or the fear of death is called **Abhinivesha**. The modifications of humans caught in bondage are coupled with these five, while the modifications of liberated-while-living sages (*Jivanmukta*) are free from them. The five types of modifications are given below:

1. **Pramana (Right Knowledge)** – This modification has three sub-divisions: *Pratyaksha* (direct perception), *Anumana* (inference), and *Agama* (scriptural or verbal testimony). There are five direct modifications of knowledge through seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and hearing. The knowledge that cannot be obtained through these five direct perceptions is inferred by the mind and intellect (*Anumana*). The matters that cannot be known through

either direct perception or inference are known through the words of experienced realized humans or scriptures. This is called *Agama Pramana*.

2. **Viparyaya (False Knowledge)** – This is the second type of modification, whose nature is incorrect or illusory knowledge, such as the mistaken perception of a snake in a rope.

3. **Vikalpa (Verbal Delusion/Fancy)** – This is the third type of modification in which there is only verbal, language-based knowledge, but no actual corresponding material object exists. For instance, saying 'the conscious power of the Atman' yields knowledge only of words. In reality, there is no conscious power separate from the *Atman*; both are one and the same. However, generating the idea of them being separate through words is merely *Vikalpa*.

4. **Nidra (Sleep)** – The state of deep sleep is also a type of modification of the mind in which there is an absolute absence of all cognitive supports.

5. **Smriti (Memory)** – The recollection of objects heard and experienced in the past is memory.

Within these five types of modifications, all three states—waking (*Jagrat*), dream (*Svapna*), and deep sleep (*Sushupti*)—are contained. In dreams, under the control of the memory modification, the impressions of the senses, mind, and intellect covered by Tamogun begin to operate.

Let us imagine the mind to be like a lake in which the reflections of the sky, clouds, trees, etc., are visible. As long as these reflections are present, the bottom of the lake cannot be seen. But when the reflections are removed, the bottom becomes visible. Alternatively, when waves arise in the water, the light from the bottom cannot be seen, but when the waves become calm, it becomes visible. In the exact same way, the *Atman*, which is like the bottom of the lake, remains unknown due to the mental modifications. When the modifications become quiet, the realization of the Self occurs. Reflections of external objects keep falling continuously into the water of the mind, or waves in the form of thoughts and doubts keep rising through memory, or it becomes muddy due to the mixing of the

Tamogun of sleep; hence, stabilization in the Self fails to occur. When all five types of modifications are completely ceased, the *Atman* abides in its true nature, and not otherwise.

Upon attaining the vision of the Self, the falsity of modification-born knowledge and the absolute truth of Self-knowledge begin to shine upon the mind, and the false illusory knowledge of worldly bondage is eliminated, just as the illusion of a snake vanishes after gaining the clear knowledge of the rope.

How does *Shaktipat* aid in the cessation of the aforementioned modifications? This has already been explained in the initial Sutras. Now, it will be shown below that the cessation of modifications happens very easily once the breaths (*Pranas*) are brought under control. What is the proof that 'modifications are subordinate to Prana'? Upon this, it is said:

13. Pranasyedam Vashe Sarvamiti Shruteh |

All this is under the control of Prana, as verified by the Shruti.

Om Pranaya Namo Yasya Sarvamidam Vashe |

Yo Bhutah Sarvasyaishvaro Yasmin-Sarvam Pratishthitam ||

— Atharva Veda, Prana Sukta, Mantra 1

("Salutations to Prana, under whose control is all this universe that has come into being. He is the Lord of all, in whom everything is anchored.")

Om Yate Tanurvachi Pratishthita Ya Shrotre Ya Chakshushi |

Ya Cha Mansi Satata Shivam Tam Kuru Motkramih ||

Pranasyedam Vashe Sarvam Tridive Yatpratishthitam |

Mateva Putran Rakshasva Shrishcha Pragyang Cha Vidhehi Nah ||

— Prashna Upanishad, Second Prashna, 12, 13

("That form of yours which is established in speech, which is in the ear, which is in the eye, and which is continuously extended in the mind— make that completely auspicious for us, do not depart! Everything in this world is under the control of Prana, and whatever is established in the third

world (heaven) as well. Protect us just as a mother protects her sons, and bestow upon us splendor and wisdom.")

14. Ubhayoh Parasparam Nirodhah ।

There is mutual cessation of both Prana and the mental modifications.

Through the cessation of *Prana*, the cessation of modifications occurs, and through the cessation of modifications, the cessation of *Prana* occurs; in this manner, the cessation of both keeps increasing. First, one should cease *Prana*, because the independent cessation of modifications is exceedingly difficult to accomplish.

15. Mahan Kim? Visheshatvachchhaktyudbodhane Tatsiddheh ।

Why is it called 'Great' (Mahan)? Because of its unique distinction, as its perfection is achieved through the awakening of energy.

Why has the adjective 'Mahan' (Great) been used before Yoga in the tenth Sutra? Is Mahayoga some other Yoga distinct from the Yoga of Vyasa or Lord Patanjali? The resolution to this doubt is given in this Sutra: Yoga is indeed that very same phenomenon which is of the nature of *Chittavritti-Nirodha*; there cannot be a second type. However, the purpose behind using the adjective 'Mahan' is that its perfection is achieved instantly through the awakening of energy; otherwise, the attainment of *Vritti-Nirodha* is said to occur only after practicing with reverence and vigor uninterruptedly over a very long period. Therefore, the very Yoga which is otherwise labor-intensive is attained quickly by the grace of the Guru.

In the Patanjali Yoga Darshan, the 'Kriya Yoga' mentioned in the first Sutra of the second chapter implies Mahayoga itself. Mahayoga is also called Siddha Yoga or Kriya-Shakti-Yoga.

16. Hatha Mantra Laya Rajayogantarbhumikatvachcha Shruteh ।

And it is called 'Great' because Hatha Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Laya Yoga, and Raja Yoga are contained within it as its internal stages, as verified by the Shruti.

After the energy is awakened, all four Yogas—Hatha, etc.—unfold and develop automatically one after another as internal stages; this is also its unique feature. The proof of the Shruti cited below supports this:

Mantro Layo Hatho Rajayogo'ntarbhumikah Kramat ।

Eka Eva Chaturdha'yang Mahayogo'bhidhiyate ॥

— Yoga Shikha Upanishad, 1-30

("Mantra, Laya, Hatha, and Raja Yoga are sequentially the internal stages; therefore, this single Yoga, manifesting fourfold, is designated as Mahayoga.")

17. Asana Pranayama Bandha Mudradayo Hathah ।

Asana, Pranayama, Bandha, and Mudras constitute Hatha Yoga.

Here, by *Pranayama*, the actions of inhalation (*Puraka*), exhalation (*Rechaka*), and retention (*Kumbhaka*) of breath are meant. *Bandhas* and *Mudras* are numerous, among which 10 are principal: *Mula Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha, Jalandhara Bandha, Maha Bandha, Maha Vedha, Maha Mudra, Viparitakarani, Vajroli, Khechari,* and *Shakti-chalana*. Based on every species of life, *Asanas* are said to be 8.4 million, but 84 are principal. According to Patanjali Yoga Darshan, it is said '*Sthiram Sukham Asanam*' (steady and comfortable posture), but Samkhya has not even mandated this rule that posture must happen only through external stillness and comfort. When the energy awakens and becomes active, various types of *Asanas, Kumbhakas,* and *Mudras* manifest automatically in certain individuals.

18. Tato Nadi Shuddhih ।

From that, the purification of the channels (Nadi-Shuddhi) takes place.

By *Nadis*, the nervous channels, energy conduits, or nerves are meant. The *Nadis* function for the flow of *Prana* energy in the exact same manner as

wires function for the flow of electricity. The *Nadis* of ordinary human beings are choked with impurities, and the flow of *Prana* inside them is not smooth. The spontaneous movements of Hatha Yoga eliminate their impurities.

19. Svadhyayeshvarapranidhane Mantrayogah |

Svadhyaya and Ishvara-Pranidhana constitute Mantra Yoga.

In the Patanjali Yoga Darshan, the chanting of Pranava (Om) and the contemplation of its meaning is called *Svadhyaya*. Within *Svadhyaya*, the chanting of liberation-bestowing mantras and the hearing, reading, and contemplating of scriptures are also included. Yoga is perfected through *Svadhyaya*, as has been stated by Vedavyasa Ji:

Svadhyayadyogamasita Yogatsvadhyayamamane |

Svadhyayayogasampatya Paramatma Prakashate ||

("From Svadhyaya, Yoga is attained; from Yoga, let one contemplate upon Svadhyaya. By the wealth of both Svadhyaya and Yoga, the Supreme Soul shines forth clearly.")

Ishvara-Pranidhana means offering everything to God and taking complete refuge in God.

The etymology of 'Pranidhan' is derived from the root 'Dha' (to hold/bear) prefixed with 'Pra' and 'Ni', meaning: one must hold God within one's interior with total, absolute certainty. The God of Yoga Darshan is present with every human being in the form of a Guru, who is spoken of as a special Purusha untouched by afflictions, actions, fruits of action, and storehouses of past impressions, in comparison to the soul trapped in bondage, and within whom the seed of omniscience is inherent. Through Mahayoga, that knowledge in seed form can be expanded to total perfection, the experience of which alone should be understood as authentic *Ishvara-Pranidhana*.

20. Tato Samadhi Siddhih |

From that, the perfection of Samadhi is achieved. — *Yoga Darshan*

'Samadhisiddhirishvarapranidhanat |'

21. Chitte Leene Layah |

When the mind dissolves, it is called Laya Yoga.

22. Pranasthairyattadupalabdhih |

Upon the stabilization of the Prana-Shakti, the attainment of Laya Yoga occurs.

23. Shatchakra Vedhat |

Because of the piercing of the six chakras (Shatchakra-Vedha).

24. Adhara Svadhisthana Manipuranahata Vishuddhagnyabhidhani Chakrani |

Muladhara, Svadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, and Agnya are the names of the chakras.

25. Payupasthenabhihrikant-Ahbhrumadhyesu Tatsthanani |

(Respectively) The anus, generative organ, navel, heart, throat, and the space between the eyebrows are their locations.

26. Tattu Susumna'dhikrtani |

However, these locations of the chakras are inside the Susumna Nadi.

Chakras are those centers within the *Susumna* where nerve complexes intersect. The *Nadis* emerging from the throat spread into the neck and arms. Those emerging from the dorsal region spread into the back and ribs. The heart is directly connected to the *Agnya Chakra* as well. The *Nadis* of the lumbar region extend into the abdomen, waist, and down to the toes of the feet. The conduits of the generative region extend into the bladder, seminal vesicles, etc. The conduits of the anus and generative region combine and spread into the perineum (*Seevani*), anus, rectum, etc. The *Agnya Chakra* is the center for the nerves of the brain, the *Chitra* division of the *Susumna*, and the nerves of the five senses of knowledge. The connection of the *Sahasrara* to all the nerves of the body is in the exact same manner as a head office connects to its branches.

27. Manolayastvagnayam |

When Prana reaches the Agnya Chakra, the dissolution of the mind occurs.

28. Sankalpavikalpa'bhavashcha ।

And the total absence of thoughts and doubts occurs.

29. Ekagrata Cha Manasah ।

And the one-pointedness of the mind takes place. That is, one-pointedness can happen upon a certain chosen thought, and a thought-free, doubt-free one-pointedness also takes place.

30. Tadhuri Rajayogah Sahasrare ।

Above that, Raja Yoga occurs in the Sahasrara.

When *Prana* goes above the *Agnya Chakra* into the *Sahasrara*, Raja Yoga is accomplished.

31. Tatra Brahmani Shaktirlayannirbijasamadhih Pranalayo Manolayashcha ।

There, that is, in the Sahasrara, due to the dissolution of the Shakti into Brahman, Nirbeeja Samadhi occurs, and both Prana and mind dissolve.

32. Tatah Drastuh Svarupe'vasthanam ।

Then occurs the stabilization of the witness in its true nature.

This is the third Sutra of the first chapter of Patanjali Yoga Darshan and describes the ultimate state of Yoga. Until the witness abides in its true nature—that is, in *Parabrahman*—the conformity or identification with modifications remains present to a lesser or greater degree.

The Shruti cited below from the Katha Upanishad is also instructing the attainment of this very same state:

Yachchhed Vangmanasi Pragyastadyachchheggyana Atmani ।

Gyanamatmani Mahati Niyachchhetadyachchhechchhanta Atmani ॥

— Valli 3, Chapter 1, Mantra 13

("Let the wise man dissolve the organs of speech and other senses into the mind, dissolve the mind into the intellect, dissolve the intellect into the great cosmic soul (*Mahat-Tattva*), and dissolve the *Mahat-Tattva* into the Peaceful Self (*Brahman*).")

In the sequence of *Shaktipat*, the perfection of the said process is accomplished via the rising of *Prana* through the *Susumna*.

Second Quarter (Dvitiya Pada)

1. Tadartha Gurumevabhigachchhet Samitpanih Shruteh |

For that, let him go to a Guru alone, with sacrificial fuel in hand, as instructed by the Shruti.

To awaken the power that bestows the knowledge of *Brahman*, let him go to a Guru alone. Without a Guru, it is not attained, as instructed by the Shruti:

Parikshya Lokan Karmachitan Brahmano, Nirvedamayanastyakritah Kritena |

Tadvigyanarthang Sa Gurumevabhigachchhet Samitpanih Shrotriyang Brahmanishtham ||

— Mundaka Upanishad, 1-2-12

("Let a Brahmana, after examining the worlds acquired through rituals, arrive at detachment, for the uncreated cannot be gained through rituals. To know That, let him approach a Guru alone, with sacrificial wood in hand, who is well-versed in the scriptures and firmly established in Brahman.")

To acquire the science of *Brahman*, one is instructed to approach a Guru while being indifferent to sensory objects. In ancient times, all seers performed sacrifices (*Yagna*); hence, the disciple went to the Guru for initiation carrying sacrificial fuel (*Samidha*) in hand. Nowadays, since the system of performing such sacrifices is no longer prevalent, one should carry leaves, flowers, fruits, etc.; one must not go empty-handed. Stating '*Samitpanih*' does not mean that in that ancient era, fruits and flowers were not carried along with the sacrificial wood. Then why was only sacrificial

wood mentioned? Two reasons appear for this. Firstly, the disciple is desirous of lighting the fire of knowledge (*Gyanagni*) within himself, and fire manifests from churning two wooden blocks (*Aranis*). Therefore, carrying sacrificial wood indicates his burning desire to receive the fire of knowledge. The Guru is compared to the upper block (*Uttararani*) and the disciple to the lower block (*Adhararani*), because from both, the fire of the science of *Brahman* manifests, and its sequence continues into future generations. The second intent visible is that the disciple considers it a matter of high pride to perform even the smallest service for the Guru, such as cutting and bringing wood.

2. Brahmanistho Vedhakah Shaktipataksamashcha Guruh |

The Guru must be established in Brahman, capable of piercing (the chakras), and empowered to perform Shaktipat.

Brahmanishtha—one whose mind is controlled and unified; whose mind, remaining in a state of one-pointedness, abides in the divine state of *Brahman* (*Brahmi Sthiti*). The description of *Brahmi Sthiti* has been given by the Lord at the end of the second chapter of the Gita while defining the steady-minded (*Sthitapragya*) or one absorbed in *Samadhi*. The one who can pierce all six chakras is called a *Vedhaka* (piercer).

***Footnote in Source text:** The Kundalini power is also spoken of as being of the form of fire. Knowledge and Yoga are also called fire, as:

'Gyanagnih Sarva Karmani Bhasmasat Kurute'rjuna |' — Gita

'Na Tasya Rogo Na Jara Na Mrityuh Praptasya Yogagnimayang Shariram |' — Shvetashvatara Upanishad, Chapter 2

Through Shaktipat, the Guru awakens the Kundalini of the disciple and ignites the fire of Yoga inside the disciple like a lamp; for this reason, the name of Lord Krishna's exalted Guru was Sage Sandipan.

3. Nigrahanugrahaksamashcha |

And he must be capable of both withholding (Nigraha) and bestowing grace (Anugraha).

Performing *Shaktipat* is called *Anugraha* (grace), and withholding or stopping it is called *Nigraha*. Through *Nigraha*, the intense speed or momentum of the disciple can be moderated. The capacity to execute *Nigraha* is just as necessary for a Guru as the capacity for *Anugraha*, because sometimes when the momentum becomes excessively high, a need arises to lower it. Only such a Guru can keep the intense momentum of the disciples under total restraint and balance.

4. Parikshya Dikshayet ।

Let the Guru test the disciple before initiating him.

If the disciple is unfit, let him not give initiation; let him give him time to become fit. A fruit that ripens with time tastes sweet; therefore, rushing is improper.

5. Shaktipat Eva Diksha ।

Performing Shaktipat itself is granting initiation.

The transmission of energy from one human being to another occurs in two ways: through touch and without touch. Further ahead, it will be explained that inside the body, the transmission of energy occurs with the support of the nerves (*Nadis*). But when it is transmitted outside the body as well, with the support of which element does its movement occur? Does it spread all around like thermal heat from fire, or does it move from one location to another in the form of a continuous stream? Can its movement be felt? If it is felt, what is its true form? Multiple such questions arise here, which form the subject matter of an independent science. Due to the lack of research on this subject using modern scientific methods, analyzing it completely according to its core elements is close to impossible; however, based on the experiences and inferences of certain great souls who practice, an attempt is being made to shed some light on these questions.

It is an experienced fact that energy flows from one location to another and spreads all around from a human being's body or exhalation just like heat from a hot iron ball. It also appears that the medium for its movement is

not ordinary atmospheric air. It is possible that it is the space element (Ether) or some other element even subtler than that. We call it the 'Cosmic Prana Sphere' (*Samasti-Prana-Mandala*). According to the terminology of Samkhya, it can probably be called mind-existence, mind-stuff (*Manas-Tattva*), or *Mahat-Tattva* as well. Sometimes, the movement of energy is perfectly straight, like a bullet. The existence of this energy has been observed to be felt by some through the sense of touch; however, being a highly subtle subject, it is not easily perceivable during the initial stages of practice. Some practitioners have also observed it visually, appearing like flashes of electrical light. This light appears moving inside the nerves and outside the body as well.

It is also the experience of practitioners that the said energy can be drawn into one's own body through intent (*Sankalpa*) from external clouds, fire, electricity, the sun, or simply from the wind, space, or any other location. Therefore, they state that the power of God is completely full inside all objects. Once the inner power is awakened, a Yogi can draw it through his intent. The energy drawn in the aforementioned manner enters the body and behaves in a conscious manner; therefore, it is distinct from and superior to physical energies like electricity.

When energy goes outward by the will of a Yogi, it can be sent anywhere across different countries on earth. Telepathy, etc., are functions of this very same energy.

By inference, it can be said that it is possible that physical forces like electricity might also be generated from this spiritual power.

Spiritual power can be contemplated from three distinct perspectives:

1. For one's own spiritual benefit.
2. For the spiritual benefit of others.
3. For application in the physical world to achieve material perfections (*Siddhis*), in a manner that reveals its relationship with physical forces.

Here, an attempt has been made to cast some light on this subject primarily from the first two perspectives.

6. Tatah Shakti Pradipanam Dipavat ।

From that, the ignition of energy occurs, just like a lamp.

Just as the flame of a burning lamp is used to light another lamp, in the exact same manner, when the power of the Guru falls upon the disciple, the disciple's own energy awakens.

7. Tatah Divyagyanam Sampadyate Kshiyate Cha Bandhanam ।

From that, divine knowledge is obtained, and bondage is destroyed.

8. Dipte Gyanagnau Malavikshepa'varanahanih ।

When the fire of knowledge is ignited, impurities (Mala), distractions (Vikshepa), and veils (Avarana) are destroyed.

Mala refers to sins, *Vikshepa* refers to the restlessness of the mind, and *Avarana* refers to the veil of ignorance.

9. Gurugrihe Nivasettisro Ratrih ।

Let him reside at the house of the Guru for three nights.

Here, the word 'night' (*Ratri*) is specifically used, not 'day'. This implies that the time for spiritual practice is most excellent after sunset and before sunrise, during the *Brahma-Muhurta*. Awakening the Kundalini during midday is restricted.

10. Toshayeachcha Bhojanavastradakshinabhih Pranipatena Sevaya Cha ।

And let him satisfy and please the Guru with food, clothes, offerings (Dakshina), prostration, and service.

The Lord has stated in the Gita:

Tadviddhi Pranipatena Pariprashnena Sevaya ।

Upadekshanti Te Gyanam Gyaninastattvadarshinah ॥

("Know that by prostration, by questioning, and by service. The wise who have realized the Truth will instruct you in knowledge.")

Here, a doubt may arise: what is the purpose of trying to please Gurus who are free from passions and desires? They are already eternally satisfied with everything. A Guru possessing a physical body does require clothes, food, wealth, etc., for basic sustenance. Their being free from attachment simply means that they do not harbor cravings for sensory objects and do not beg or command anyone to fulfill their needs. However, it is the absolute duty of disciples to infer and recognize their requirements and fulfill them to the best of their capacity without being asked. Through this, they will acquire the satisfaction of the Guru.

11. Diksha Trividha ।

Initiation is of three types: Anavi, Shakti, and Shambhavi.

12. Darshanad Bhasanatsparshachcha ।

Through sight (look), through speech, and through touch.

Generally, *Shaktipat* is executed in three ways: (1) through sight, (2) by imparting a mantra, etc. (speech), and (3) by touching with the hand. The transmission of energy through these three actions happens only when the one executing *Shaktipat* intends to do so, and not otherwise. Therefore, *Shaktipat* happens through intent alone; touch, etc., are merely external instruments.

13. Manasyapi Kechit ।

Initiation happens mentally as well; therefore, some authorities consider Shaktipat to be of four types.

As stated previously, without intent, initiation does not happen even through touch, sight, or speech; then what is the need to state a fourth type called mental (*Manasi*)? The resolution to this is that mental initiation is given in such situations where, due to some reason, the meeting of the Guru and disciple cannot take place at one location. For instance, if both are in distant countries and the disciple cannot approach the Guru, or if the Guru does not deem the physical presence of the disciple before him

necessary, then through the intent of the Guru, *Shaktipat* can happen upon the distant disciple.

14. Sa Punarapyadhikari Bhedatastridha ।

That initiation is again of three types based on the classification of the eligible seekers.

15. Mridumadhyativratvat Pipilikakapikhaganyayavat ।

Owing to being mild (Mradu), medium (Madhya), and intense (Tivra) —resembling the analogies of the ant, the monkey, and the bird.

Based on the variation of the seeker, a mild momentum arises in someone, a medium momentum in another, and an intense momentum in someone else. For some, it takes one, two, three days or even more time to achieve complete development. Someone achieves development during the very first instance, but slowly and gradually; while another achieves development with great momentum the very moment touch, sight, or a mantra is received. Just as an ant reaches the fruit on a tree very slowly, a monkey reaches it by leaping and jumping from one branch to another, and a bird flies up and perches directly upon it.

16. Sa Kriyavati, Kalavati, Varnamayi Vedhamayiti Brahma ।

Lord Brahma has stated that initiation manifests as Kriyavati, Kalavati, Varnamayi, and Vedhamayi.

It is called **Kriyavati** because various types of spontaneous physical movements and actions occur during it. It is called **Kalavati** because the purification of elements (*Tattva-Shuddhi*) is accomplished through it. The 36 elements have been classified into 5 *Kalas*. The names of the 36 elements are as follows: *Shiva, Shakti, Sada-Shiva, Ishvara, Shuddha-Vidya, Maya, Kala (time), Kala (attribute), Niyati, Vidya, Raga, Purusha, Prakriti, Mahat-Tattva, Ahankara, Manas,* the 5 senses of knowledge, the 5 senses of action, the 5 subtle elements, and the 5 gross elements. Among these, the first two elements belong to the *Shantyatita Kala*, the next 3 elements to *Shanti Kala*, the 7 elements to *Maya Kala*, the 23 elements to *Pratishtha Kala*, and the final earth element belongs to the *Nivritti Kala*.

The entire universe is a manifest spectacle of names and forms. *Kalavati* is connected to the formal *Kalas*, while **Varnamayi** is connected to the vocal names—meaning the auditory creation of sound. In *Varnamayi*, the power of letters, words, mantras, poetry, etc., awakens spontaneously. It is called **Vedhamayi** because the piercing of the six chakras is accomplished through it. These four forms are expressed completely only in a few chosen individuals. Generally, only one, two, or three forms are expressed in a person.

From 'Akar' to 'Hakar', including 'Ksha' and 'La', there are 51 letters (*Varnas*). Because gender, person, number, and tense are each threefold, words (*Padas*) are of 3×3×3×3=81 types. Due to being connected to the objects of the ten senses and the eleventh mind, mantras—meaning sentences—are of 11 types.

17. Shivadeshakariniti Shambhavi ।

The one that delivers the commands of Lord Shiva is called Shambhavi.

When the commands of Lord Shiva begin to arrive clearly through hearing, through speech, through writing, or within thoughts, it should be understood that the initiation is **Shambhavi**. It is called Shambhavi precisely due to the intense absorption of Shiva (*Shivavesha*).

18. Yogoktakramato Yogadiksha ।

Initiation given according to the sequence prescribed in Yoga is Yoga-Diksha.

In this, yogic actions and movements are predominant. Other means remain secondary.

19. Saiva Shakteyi Shakti Gyanavati Va ।

That very same initiation is also termed Shakteyi, Shakti, or Gyanavati initiation.

Instead of calling it Gyanavati, some also call it *Gyana-Diksha* (knowledge-initiation), because energy itself is knowledge. Verbal instruction is not authentic instruction in knowledge. The light of

knowledge that arises spontaneously within the disciple through the energy is truly the instruction in knowledge. This is a level below Shambhavi initiation, because only the absorption of energy (*Shaktiavesha*) occurs in it.

20. Mantramarganusarena Mantri ।

Initiation given in accordance with the path of Mantras is called Mantri. Those mantras through which the awakening of energy occurs are conscious (*Chetan*) mantras.

21. Mantrachanadyupacharairanavi ।

The initiation that brings about gradual elevation with the help of rituals like mantras and worship is called Anavi. When the immediate awakening of energy does not take place, the effort-intensive chanting and rituals fall strictly within *Anavopaya*.

22. Shatchakravedhadvedhamayi ।

Because of the piercing of the six chakras, the initiation is called Vedhamayi.

23. Vedanta Yoga Bhakti Sampradaya Bhedato'pi Bahuvidha ।

Initiation is also of multiple kinds based on the variations of traditions like Vedanta, Yoga, and Devotion.

24. Sa Ekaiva Shaktimatvat ।

Despite being of multiple kinds, it is one and the same because the awakening of energy is uniform.

The power of *Brahman* is singular; therefore, the fruit of all of them is *Moksha* alone, even though its development is seen and heard of in multi-faceted ways.

25. Vitaragachittavalambanat ।

Shaktipat initiation occurs because of taking the support of a passion-free mind (Vitaraga-Chitta).

26. Siddhasankalpadva ।

Or, due to the presence of a perfected intent (Siddha-Sankalpa).

By virtue of being free from attachments, a Yogi becomes possessed of a perfected intent; therefore, the word 'Va' (or) is utilized. "For what reason does the power of the Guru enter the disciple and bring about his spiritual awakening? How do his modifications begin to cease so quickly?" The resolution to these doubts is given through these two Sutras. In the commentary of the first Sutra, it has been explained that by anchoring upon the mind of passion-free Yogis, when transmission of energy happens via *Shaktipat*, disciples achieve the benefit of one-pointedness very quickly. Ordinary people interpret the Sutra '*Vitaraga Visayam Va Chittam*' from Patanjali's text based on logic and inference, but cannot comprehend it thoroughly. Vedavyasa Ji, in his commentary, did not speak of mere meditation upon passion-free saints; rather, he stated that the cessation of mental modifications happens through the anchor—meaning refuge—of a passion-free mind. In *Shaktipat* initiation, the transmission of energy happens by taking refuge in the intent of the Guru, and through that energy, the disciple receives the anchor of a passion-free mind. Those who receive *Shaktipat* initiation can comprehend this principle very easily because they experience it directly.

The exceptionally close relationship between the mind (*Chitta*) and energy (*Shakti*) is expounded in various places across the Shrutis.

27. Shruteh ।

There is verification from the Shruti. As:

Tejo Ha Vai Udanastasmat-Upashantatejah Punarbhavamidriyairmanasi Sampadyamana । Yachchhitastenaisha Pranamayati Pranah Tejasa Yuktah Sahatmana Yatha Sankalpitam Lokam Nayati ॥

— Prashna Upanishad, Chapter 3, Mantra 9, 10

("Splendor indeed is Udana. Therefore, one whose splendor has quieted down, to regenerate that splendor, taking the senses beautifully into the mind, one who has unified his mind—into him, through that unified mind, Prana arrives. And Prana, coupled with splendor along with the Soul, leads

the human being to whatever world he intends; that is, it grants that exact perfection.")

In the aforementioned Shrutis, if the meaning of '*Upashantatejah*' is taken as physical death, then as stated by Adi Shankaracharya Maharaj, in the next birth, *Prana* carries the soul to the world intended during this life. However, the very process that happens under the control of Nature at the time of death is performed willfully by a Yogi during his lifetime; that is, he dissolves the senses into the mind, the mind into the intellect, then the intellect into the Soul, and along with the Soul, executing concentration, meditation, and *Samadhi* via the *Susumna* path, achieves perfection as intended. During the lifetime, the meaning of '*Upashantatejah*' can be applied to those human beings whose divine splendor (*Brahma-Tejas*) has depleted. For them, the means to regenerate that splendor is to execute the withdrawal of senses (*Pratyahara*) via the path of Yoga to achieve one-pointedness of the mind.

By having a unified mind (*Samyachchitta*), the *Prana* power comes into a human being; this fact has been revealed in the aforementioned Shruti and is also a matter of everyone's experience. In the eighth Mantra of this very same Prashna, the sun is stated to be the external *Prana*, which is connected to the ocular *Prana*. The elemental power of the earth is the external *Apana*, space is *Samana*, wind is *Vyana*, and fire/splendor is *Udana*. A human being with a ceased mind begins to receive all the five types of powers from the cosmic reservoir. As we have stated in the 5th Sutra of this very same section, a Yogi begins to draw energy from the wind, space, sun, and fire. The method to invoke *Prana* power is nothing but unification of the mind (*Yachchittata*). Through the cessation of the mind, coupling the *Prana* power with the splendor of *Udana*, a Yogi becomes filled with divine light, and utilizing that very same *Prana* power via the support of the ocular *Prana* through sight, or via the support of the fire-formed *Samana* power through a mantra, or via the support of the wind-formed *Vyana* power through touch, executes *Shaktipat* and generates the said divine splendor (*Brahma-Tejas*) within others as well. In accordance with the intent of the Yogi, transmission of *Prana* power along with *Udana* happens within the disciple; this deeper meaning is also inherent within the 10th Mantra.

In the aforementioned Shrutis, the secret of acquiring energy has been revealed clearly. Those human beings with depleted splendor who cannot bring their senses and mind under control on their own manage to accomplish this task through the anchor of the Guru's power via *Shaktipat*. After *Shaktipat*, due to their own energy awakening, they begin to exercise restraint over their senses and mind on their own. Cessation of mind through *Prana*, and accumulation of *Prana* power through cessation of mind, keep increasing progressively.

28. Smrteshcha ।

And there is verification from the Smritis (Puranas/Tantras) as well.

The secret of this science is found in greater detail across the Puranas and Tantra scriptures. As:

Shaktipatasamayogadrite Tatvani Tatvatah ।

Tadvvaptistadvishuddhishcha Gnatumeva Na Shakyate ॥

— Shiva Purana, Vayaviya Samhita

("Without the beautiful conjunction of Shaktipat, the core knowledge of the elements, the all-pervading nature of the Soul, and its pure, enlightened true form can absolutely never be known.")

29. Tattusati Dharmadharmayoh Samye ।

However, that Shaktipat occurs only when there is an equilibrium between virtue (Dharma) and vice (Adharma).

That is, Gurus do not execute *Shaktipat* upon sinful humans, and even if they wish to do so, transmission of energy fails to occur if there is an excess of sin. Only when sins are burnt away and an equilibrium of sin and virtue arrives does its development manifest. With this intent, granting initiation to humans suffering from sinful diseases like leprosy, tuberculosis, epilepsy, hemorrhoids, gonorrhea, and syphilis is prohibited. The blind, the one-eyed, the deaf, the limb-deficient, and those with extra limbs are also counted within this exact category.

30. Yasminnapatati Taddhi Na Patram ।

The human being within whom the energy does not descend is not a fit vessel (Patra).

However, the meaning of this Sutra also does not imply that anyone within whom energy moves is automatically a perfectly fit vessel for initiation. There can also be a possibility that despite energy moving, some may not be fully eligible for initiation.

31. Varnanam Na Niyamah ।

There is no restriction of caste/race (Varna).

Whomever the Guru accepts is indeed a fit vessel; there is no restriction of caste or race. Christians, Muslims, residents of Europe or other countries —all can be fit vessels.

32. Balavriddhastripmansah Sarve'dhikarinah ।

Children, the elderly, women, and men—all are eligible.

33. Ekaki Dixatairva Saha Samabhyaset ।

Let him practice alone or along with other initiated persons.

34. Shuchau Guptadeshe Mathe Guhayam Va ।

Let him practice in a clean, secret place, a closed room, a monastery, or a cave.

Practicing out in public before everyone is restricted, because doing so causes a depletion of energy, creates obstacles in the practitioner's growth, and invites the fear of impediments.

35. Tatra Sthapayet Kambalasanamajinasanam Va ।

There, let him spread a blanket seat, or a seat made of deer-skin or tiger-skin.

One must not practice on a mat, or directly on bare ground, stone, or a wooden seat without an appropriate insulated seat covering.

Third Quarter (Tritiya Pada)

1. Koshesu Tadvikasah ।

2. Annapranamanovignanandamayahi Shruteh ।

Its development manifests within the sheaths (Koshas). Earthly/ Physical (Annamaya), Vital Airs (Pranamaya), Mental (Manomaya), Intellectual/Wisdom (Vignanamaya), and Blissful (Anandamaya) are the sheaths, as verified by the Shruti.

The sheaths are five in number. A description of the five sheaths is found in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Among them, the first four should be understood strictly as sheaths, but the final *Anandamaya* is itself the very form of the Soul's bliss:

'Tasya Priyameva Shirah, Modo Dakshina Pakshah, Pramodah Uttara Pakshah, Anando Atma, Brahma Puchchham Pratishtha ।'

("Of that Anandamaya sheath, affection is the head, joy is the right wing, intense joy is the left wing, bliss is the soul, and Brahman is the tail-anchor.")

Therefore, the development of energy is directly perceived within the first four; however, within the *Anandamaya*, the meaning of the development of bliss is merely a verbal distinction (*Vikalpa*). Its meaning must be understood as: experiencing bliss is itself the direct realization of the bliss-filled Supreme Lord, and this is the true development of the Anandamaya.

'Sava Esha Purusho'nnarasamayah, Tasmatva Etasmat-Annarasamayat, Anyo'ntara Atma Pranamayah, Pranamayat Anyo'ntara Atma Manomayah, Manomayat Anyo'ntara Atma Vignanamayah, Vignanamayat Anyo'ntara Atma'nandamayah ।'

— Taittiriya Upanishad, 2-5

How does the development of energy occur within the said sheaths? For this, the true nature of the sheaths is shown below.

3. Parthivo'nnamayah ।

The earthly physical body is the Annamaya sheath (made of food).

4. Tatra Nadayo'nantah ।

Inside it, there are infinite channels (Nadis).

In the Prashna Upanishad, the number of *Nadis* is stated to be 72,000,000. There is one *Susumna* and 100 principal *Nadis*. Then, from each of these, 72,000 branches branch out. In this manner, the entire body is pervaded by infinite *Nadis*. In English, these *Nadis* are called Nerves. To comprehend the science of *Nadis*, read our English book—*'Devatma Shakti'*.

5. Kandastanmulam ।

The bulb (Kanda) is their root source.

Inside the *Kanda*, a gland named **Ganglion Impar** is described in English medical science. From that gland, according to the opinion of Western scholars, two nerves emerge which stand outside the spinal column on its right and left sides. Their name in English is given as **Sympathetic Columns**. These two are what we call *Ida* and *Pingala*. According to the view of our seers, the *Kanda* is a muscular structure that is 9 digits long and 4 digits in circumference. At its center lies the location of the *Kundalini* power. From there, the origin of all three—*Susumna, Ida,* and *Pingala*—takes place. This location is above the anus and below the generative organ, close to the coccyx bone of the spinal column.

6. Payupasthayormadhye Tatsthanam ।

The location of that Kanda is in the middle region between the anus and the generative organ.

7. Etasmadidapingala Susumna Udbhutah ।

From this, Ida, Pingala, and Susumna emerge.

According to the opinion of Western doctors, the *Susumna* is not connected to it; however, the experience of Yogis is contrary to this.

8. Tabhyah Shakha Pratishakha Kramena Sahasrashah ।

From those three, thousands of nerves arise sequentially as branches and sub-branches.

According to Western doctors, the origin point of nerves is the brain/cranium; however, the opinion of Yogis is that the *Kanda* (ganglion impar)

is the root of all. From it, three main trunks emerge which are thin below and become thick above. One of them stands inside the spinal column, and two stand outside.

There are twenty-four nodes in *Ida* and twenty-four in *Pingala*, which are called **ganglia** in English. In the Yoga Shikha Upanishad, these are called *Mani* (jewels). From these jewels, one branch each goes and meets inside the *Chitra* division of the *Susumna*. The branch emerging from *Ida* meets the left side of *Chitra*, and the one emerging from *Pingala* meets the right side of *Chitra*. On the other side, other branches also emerge from these jewels. They all spread across all the limbs and organs of the body, just like the veins spread in a peepal leaf.

The aforementioned sequence extends up to the *Agnya Chakra*. Above that, *Ida* and *Pingala* come to an end, but their two branches extend up to both nostrils. The nerve complexes within *Chitra* connected to them cross over (Cross ×) from right to left and left to right, spreading into the brain. The location where they cross each other is called **Varanasi**. Here resides Lord Vishwanath. The *Agnya Chakra* is called **Prayag**.

Slightly above the *Agnya Chakra* lies the mental chakra (**sensory centre**), from where the nerves connected to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, mouth, and heart emerge. Western scholars have classified all these into three categories: (1) **cerebral nerves**—meaning those that emerge from the lower brain division of the *Susumna*, i.e., the cranial bulb; (2) **spinal**—which emerge from the spine and spread into the entire body; and (3) **sympathetic**—which emerge from *Ida* and *Pingala* and spread into all organs. They are called sympathetic because they cooperate with the *Susumna*. The scholars of India have considered all these to be branches of the *Susumna* itself, as stated in the following verse:

Madhyasthayah Susumnayah Parva Panchasu Sambhavah |

Shakhopashakhatang Praptah Shiralaksha Trayatparam ||

("The nerves originating from the five divisions of the Susumna located in the center of the body exceed more than three hundred thousand through the sequence of branches and sub-branches.")

The five divisions are the cervical, dorsal (thoracic), lumbar, sacral, and coccygeal. In English, their names are as follows: (1) Cervical (2) Thoracic (3) Lumbar (4) Sacral (5) Coccygeal.

From the aforementioned description, it is essential to know that the sequence of Yogis expands upward from the *Kanda* to the brain, which is the direct or evolutionary order (*Anuloma*), while that of Western science is the reverse or involutionary order (*Viloma*). The energy resides in a potential form (**in statical form**) inside the *Kanda*, and when it ascends through the *Susumna* gate into the *Sahasrara* to accomplish *Samadhi*, *Moksha* is obtained. Contrary to this, the evolutionary sequence of desire, sensory perception, and action throws one into the world, becoming the cause of the bondage of birth, death, and consumption.

9. Susumna Vamshasthita ।

10. Tasyamurdhato Vajrachitra Viraja Kramena Samputitah ।

The Susumna is located within the spinal column (backbone), and inside it, from the top toward the center, there are three divisions enclosed sequentially—Vajra, Chitra, and Viraja.

Their English names are as follows: **White portion, Grey portion, and Empty canal**.

11. Purve Dvebahih ।

The first two (Ida and Pingala) are outside the spine.

12. Te Uttarasvamarpite ।

Those two are surrendered/connected into the higher Susumna.

13. Sarvopari Vajra Vajravadridha ।

Foremost on the outside is Vajra, firm and solid like a thunderbolt.

14. Madhye Chitra Chitravarna Savyapasavye-Dapingalavati ।

In the middle is Chitra, multi-colored, which possesses the characteristics of Ida and Pingala on its left and right portions.

Nerves emerge from both portions of *Chitra* toward the left and right, wrapping first over the *Susumna* itself; then, the ones from the left portion exit through the left hole of the spine, and the ones from the right portion exit through the right hole, meeting *Ida* and *Pingala*, and also spreading independently down to the hands and feet. That is, through them, the connection of the entire body to the brain is maintained.

15. Virajeva Brahmanadi Kamalakanikavat Shatchakravati Cha |

Viraja (the empty canal) itself is the Brahmanadi, which is like the stalk of a lotus and contains the six chakras.

In reality, the location of the chakras should be known to be within *Chitra*, but as long as these chakras do not open, the path of *Viraja* does not become clear.

16. Pramukha Mokshamargatvachchhruteh |

This one alone is paramount, owing to being the path to Moksha, as verified by the Shruti. The Shruti is proof of this:

'Shatang Chaika Cha Hridayasya Nadyastasang Murdhanamabhinihsritaika |

Tayordhvamayannamritatvameti Vishvanganva Utkramena Bhavanti ||'

— Katha Upanishad, 2-6-16

("There are one hundred and one nadis of the heart. Among them, one extends up to the crown of the head. Ascending through it, one attains immortality; the others serve for departing in various directions, leading to rebirth in the world.")

Here, instead of taking 'heart' as the physical heart pump, one must take the power of the heart—meaning the *Prana* power. Therefore, by the *Nadis* of the heart, the *Prana*-carrying or nervous channels are implied. Shrimat Shankaracharya Maharaj has also interpreted that single *Nadi* strictly as the *Susumna Nadi*, and it ascends not from the physical heart, but within the spinal column, as is clear from the verse cited below:

'Gudasya Prishthabhage'smin Vinadando Sa Dehabhrit |

Dirghasthi Dehaparyantang Brahmanaditi Kathyate ||'

— Yoga Shikha Upanishad, 6-8

("In this rear part of the anus, the spinal column sustains the body. It is made of segmented bone extending up to the skull. Inside it, the Brahmanadi is situated—so it is said.")

Some people think that because the word 'heart' has appeared in the aforementioned Shruti of the Katha Upanishad, this single *Nadi* is not the *Susumna*, but rather the **Vagus nerve**, which has been called the *Kurma Nadi* in Patanjali's text. Meditating upon it brings merely stability of the mind, but *Samadhi* is accomplished strictly when *Prana* ascends into the *Susumna*. Because:

17. Anubhavadapi Yoginam ।

From the direct experience of Yogis as well, it is verified to be the Susumna alone.

18. Smrteshcha ।

And there is verification from the Smritis as well. Extensive descriptions of the *Susumna* are found across the Tantra scriptures and Puranas.

19. Sagnana-Kriyatmakatvat Dvividha Anya ।

Other nerves are of two types, owing to being sensory (cognitive) and motor (active).

20. Tabhih Pranashcharati ।

Through those nerves, the Prana power flows.

21. Esha Pranamayah ।

This is the Pranamaya sheath (the vital air sheath).

The *Pranamaya* sheath is a subtle, energy-filled sheath inside the *Annamaya* sheath. Although this energy pervades the gross body through the network of physical tissues, the said tissue-network or nerves are not themselves the *Pranamaya* sheath.

22. Hridi Sthanam Manasah |

The location of the mind is in the heart.

Some individuals colored in Western perspectives hold the view that all nerves are connected strictly to the brain, while only the blood conduits (arteries and veins) are connected to the heart. Therefore, they claim that the origin point of the 101 *Nadis* stated in the Kathopanishad must be located somewhere inside the brain, and they term it the 'Yogic Heart'. Although they cannot provide any information regarding the location, shape, or action of their said imaginary heart, they seek confirmation by citing texts like the Yoga Vashistha as proof.

In the Narayana Upanishad, the location of the heart is stated clearly to be 10 digits above the navel. All ancient masters have accepted the heart as the literal heart. The word 'Heart' itself is a linguistic derivative of the Sanskrit word '*Hridaya*'. The control of all nerves is subordinate to the heart. If the brain becomes inactive while the heart continues to function, death does not occur; but the moment the heart stops beating, death occurs instantly. In the state of *Samadhi*, although the movement of the heart stops, the operations of *Prana* also cease or become so subtle that they appear closed. No master of Yoga has ever stated that the location where *Prana* ascends into the *Sahasrara* via the *Susumna* path is the heart.

Yogiraj Sri Ramana Maharshi used to point to the location of the heart on the right side of the chest, from where the throb of the 'Aham' (I-thought) modification is felt in experience. We consulted **anatomists** on this subject. They state that the upper corner of the heart which exercises **nervous control** is tilted toward the right. That itself should be understood as the *Kurma Nadi*.

Now the question arises: when the state of *Brahman* (*Shambhavopaya*) can also be attained through individual effort (*Anavopaya*), what is the necessity of *Shaktipat*? It has already been stated that all methods of *Anavopaya* are labor-intensive and effort-driven. If the practitioner, due to

his limited and inexperienced intellect, fails to perform them correctly according to the guidance of the Guru and scriptural injunctions, and goes astray or falls ill before reaching the goal, his entire labor goes to waste. Numerous practitioners have been observed who, despite being engaged in practices for a long period, failed to make satisfactory progress. Through *Shaktipat*, the disciple's dormant spiritual power, which is filled with inherent knowledge, awakens and protects him from all obstacles, leading him across effortlessly. The second benefit is that the practitioner begins to experience a spontaneous detachment from sensory objects, which is an extremely difficult task. It is said that the taste for sensory objects does not fade until the Supreme is realized, and:

Yatato Hyapi Kaunteya Purushasya Vipashchitah ।

Indriyani Pramathini Haranti Prasabham Manah ॥

— Gita, 2-60

When the practitioner's dormant power is awakened through the *Shaktipat* of the Guru's grace, his mind withdraws from external objects, becomes a witness to the divine inner experiences, and begins to delight in the Self; then external sensory objects begin to taste completely bland to him:

'Yo'ntahsukho'ntararamastathantarjyotireva Yah ।

Sa Yogi Brahmanirvanam Brahmabhuto'dhigachchhati ॥'

— Gita, 5-24

We have compared the mind to a cinema screen. This screen is so unique that it automatically prints all objects—sound, touch, sight, taste, smell—upon itself, automatically evaluates them via the intellect, creates multiple diverse intents based on them via the mind, and automatically gets trapped in attachment to them. Upon the awakening of energy, it experiences an unprecedented inner bliss, due to which it detaches from external sensory pleasure and abides in the Self.

'Manomayo'yam Purusho Bhah Satyasminnandahridate ।'

— Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 5-6-1

23. Tadapi Prana'nugam ।

That too follows the Prana power. The movement of the mind also closely follows behind *Prana*. It is said:

Indriyanam Hi Charatam Yanmano'nu Vidhiyate I

Tadasya Harati Pragyang Vayurnavamivambhasi II

— Gita, 2-67

("When the mind follows behind the wandering senses, it sweeps away the intellect of that human being just as the wind sweeps away a boat upon the waters.")

The senses are merely the gross operation of the *Prana* power.

24. Esha Manomayah I

This is called the Manomaya sheath (the mental sheath).

The very movement of the mind, which is filled with intent, is called the *Manomaya* sheath. The modifications of the mind should be understood as the waves of the *Manomaya* sheath. It is said: '*Sankalpatmakam Manah*' (the mind is of the nature of intent).

25. Kurmanadya Tadvignanema Yuktam I

This Manomaya sheath is joined to the Vignanamaya through the Kurma Nadi. The *Kurma Nadi* is called the **Vagus nerve** in English.

26. Murdhni Vignanamayah I

The Vignanamaya sheath (intellectual sheath) is in the brain.

The characteristics of the *Vignanamaya* sheath are consciousness, awareness, intellect, and ego-assertion. In English, these are counted under the **different states of consciousness**. The *Vignanamaya* sheath has three layers or levels: (1) The storehouse of impressions (**Sub-consciousness**), (2) Memory (**Personal consciousness**), and (3) Pure awareness (**Pure or impersonal consciousness**).

Whatever good or bad actions a human being has performed in this birth or past births, their impressions remain permanently accumulated within the *Vignanamaya* sheath, which is called the storehouse of impressions

(*Samskarashaya*) or the causal body (*Karana Sharira*). But their knowledge occurs only when they arrive upon the canvas of memory. This itself is a part of the *Vignanamaya* sheath. The first is the state of impressions, and the second is the state of the mind. In pure awareness, unconditioned knowledge occurs, which shines forth due to the predominance of pure *Sattva Guna*. In it, sensory knowledge or modification-born knowledge remains absent.

27. Sagnana Kriyachchhatmikashaktih ।

Power manifests in three forms: cognitive (Sagnana), active (Kriya), and volitional (Ichchha).

28. Manovignanabhidhaniachchha ।

The power of volition (willpower) operates through the mind and intellect.

29. Gyanedriyaih Sagnana ।

The cognitive power operates through the senses of knowledge. The 5 senses of smell, taste, sight, touch, and hearing are the senses of knowledge. The power that operates inside them is called the *Sagnana* (cognitive) power.

30. Karmendriyaih Kriya ।

The active power operates through the senses of action. Speaking, grasping, walking, procreation, and evacuation of waste are the operations of the *Kriya* (active) power.

31. Sarve Prane Pratisthitam ।

All the above are anchored within Prana.

'***Araiva Rathanabhau Prane Sarvang Pratishthitam***'

— Prashna Upanishad, 2-6

("Just as spokes are fixed into the hub of a chariot wheel, in the exact same manner, the body, senses, mind, and intellect are all anchored within Prana.")

32. Pranah Panchavidhah |

Prana is of five types.

33. Prano'panah Samano Vyanah Udanashcha |

Prana, Apana, Samana, Vyana, and Udana.

These five are the sub-divisions of one and the same power, even though they are witnessed executing work in five distinct ways. Its operation pervades everywhere across the microcosm and macrocosm. For this reason, it has been described in the Upanishads from both physical and spiritual perspectives. As:

Adityo Hava Pranah |

— Prashna Upanishad, 1-5

("The sun indeed is Prana.")

That single force assumes five forms to sustain everyone.

Tan Varishthah Prana Uvacha Ma Moham Apadyatha Ahamevai Tatpanchadhatmanam Pravibhajyaitad Banavamastabhya Vidharayamiti |

— Prashna Upanishad, 2-3

("To them (the five gross elements, the senses of action like speech, the mind, and the senses of knowledge like the eyes), the paramount Prana said: Do not fall into this delusion that you alone are sustaining this body or the macrocosm, because I alone, dividing myself fivefold, provide refuge to this body and sustain it in the physical universe.")

Esho'gnistapathyedha Surya Esha Parjanyo Maghavanesha Vayuh |

Esha Prithivi Rayirdevah Sadasachchamritang Chayat ||

— Prashna Upanishad, 2-5

("This Prana burns as fire, this is the sun, this rain clouds as Indra, this is the wind, this is the earth, and this is Rayi; meaning, this deity embodies

all objects of consumption. What more to say, it is the manifest, the unmanifest, everything, and immortal too.")

Adityo Ha Bahyah Prana Prithivyang Ya Devata Saisha Purushasyapanavamastabhyantara Yat Akashah Sa Samano Vayurvyanah | Tejo Hava Udanam ||

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-8

("The sun is the external Prana, the elemental power belonging to the earth stands providing refuge to the Apana of the human being, the space extended inside is Samana, the wind is Vyana, and splendor/fire is Udana.")

The spiritual fivefold forms are also the sub-divisions of that single *Prana* power. As:

...Esha Prana Itaran Pranan Prithak Prithageva Sannidhatte |

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-4

("This Prana alone directs the other Pranas separately to their respective stations.")

From the variations of the said fivefold *Prana* power, the *Pranamaya* sheath is formed.

34. Dashavidha Itikechit | Naga Kurma Krikila Devadatta Dhananjaya'bhidheya Anye |

"Prana is of ten types"—such is also the opinion of certain authorities. Naga, Kurma, Krikila, Devadatta, and Dhananjaya are the names of the other five.

***Footnote in Source text:** The words *Prana, Apana,* etc., are derived from the root 'Anach', which means to sustain life. Therefore, the meaning of all five Pranas is to sustain life through their respective actions. If the action of even one of them becomes defective, it becomes the cause of death.

Naga operates in actions like sneezing, hiccuping, and belching. *Kurma* operates in the blinking and opening of the eyelids; *Krikila* in inducing

hunger and thirst; *Devadatta* in bringing sleep; and *Dhananjaya* operates in maintaining the shape of the body even after death. These also fall strictly within the *Pranamaya* sheath.

35. Chakshuh Shrotre Mukhanasikabhyam Pranah Svayam Pratisthite ।

Prana establishes itself directly within the organs of eyes and ears, operating through the mouth and nostrils.

36. Apanayatiti Apanah ।

The power that leads downward is named Apana. As it is said:

Payupasthe'panam ।

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-5

("Apana operates within the anus and generative organ.")

37. Samam Nayatiti Samanah ।

The one that leads everything equally everywhere is the Samana wind. As is stated in the Shruti:

Madhye Tu Samanah । Eshahyetadbhuktannam Samang Nayati Tasmat-Etha Saptarchisho Bhavanti ॥

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-5

("In the middle sits Samana; it distributes the consumed food equally across the body, from which these seven flames arise—2 ears, 2 eyes, 2 nostrils, and 1 mouth. Alternatively, the 5 senses of knowledge, mind, and intellect combined are the 7 flames.")

38. Vyapnotiti Vyanah ।

It is all-pervading; therefore, it is called Vyana.

Dvasaptatirdvasaptatih Pratishakha Nadi Sahasrani Bhavantya-Asuvyanashcharati ॥

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-6

("In all the nerves numbering seventy-two thousand branches and sub-branches, the one that executes transmission of power is Vyana.")

39. Urdhvanayatilityudanah ।

It leads upward; it is called Udana.

By virtue of its strength, Yogis protect their creative energy, practice absolute celibacy, and drawing it upward, are called *Urdhvareta* (those with upward-directed energy), experiencing *Samadhi* by ascending *Prana* into the *Susumna*. At the time of death, drawing the life force of ordinary humans, this power carries it to other worlds of virtue and vice or back to the human world. As is stated in the Shruti:

Athaikayordhva Udanah Punyena Punyang Lokam Nayati, Papena Papamubhabhyam Manushya Lokam ।

— Prashna Upanishad, 3-7

("And among all those nerves, the Udana moving upward through a single Nadi carries one to virtuous worlds through virtue, to sinful worlds through sin, and to the human world through a mixture of both.")

In the commentary on the said Shruti, Sri Shankaracharya interprets 'single Nadi' as the leading upward of *Udana* via the *Susumna Nadi*.

40. Asango Hyayam-Atma'nandamayah ।

The Atman, which is intrinsically unattached, is itself Anandamay (bliss-filled). Although this sheath of bliss emerged from the Atman is veiled by the covering of Tamogun.

In the Brahma Sutras, Lord Vyasa has stated that in *Anandamaya*, the suffix 'Mayat' is utilized in the sense of abundance (*Prachurya*), and not to denote a mutation/modification (*Vikara*), unlike its contrary use in *Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya,* and *Vignanamaya* where 'Mayat' denotes mutation (Sutra: '*Vikara Shabdaneti Chenna Prachuryat*'— 1,1,13). The opposing argument raises a doubt that since the word ending in the 'Mayat' suffix is used for a mutation, *Anandamaya* cannot be said of the *Brahman*; it must be some sheath representing a mutation of bliss, similar to *Annamaya*, etc. Then, the resolving argument answers this doubt

stating that it is not so; here, the suffix 'Mayat' has been used in the sense of abundance, not mutation. Although further ahead in the established tenet, they prove that *Anandamaya* is also a sheath, which should be understood as deep sleep (*Sushupti*).

41. Vikasah Ananda-Ghurna-Kampodbhava-Nidramurchchhatmakah |

The development manifests in the form of bliss (Ananda), reeling/ rotation (Ghurna), the arising of tremors (Kampa), sleep (Nidra), and fainting/swooning (Murchha).

After *Shaktipat* takes place, due to the disciple's energy awakening, the development of energy manifests within his gross and subtle bodies. Until complete development is achieved, it is proper for him to remain close to the Guru; for this reason, the rule of three nights has been ordained. Generally, development is achieved in everyone within three days. High-caliber seekers achieve complete development that very instant. However, they too should follow the rule of three nights.

As explained above, development occurs due to the rising of the *Prana* power. Therefore, first and foremost, the impact falls upon the *Pranamaya* sheath, from which symptoms like a state of intoxication, heaviness in the head or the entire body, etc., manifest. Then, inside the gross body—meaning the *Annamaya* sheath—tremors and reeling/rotation begin to happen, the body begins to execute automatic physical movements, and simultaneously, streams of bliss begin to well up inside the mind. Sometimes, sleep also arrives, and in some individuals, an ecstatic swoon also happens; however, generally, fainting is not witnessed, and the human being maintains clear awareness of all experiences throughout. The cessation of the mind should be understood as the development of the *Manomaya*. Experiences of divine hearing, divine sight, divine touch, divine taste, and divine smell are the development of the *Vignanamaya* sheath, and the manifestation of bliss should be understood as the direct experience of the bliss-formed *Atman* itself.

It has already been stated that development happens due to the rising of the *Prana* power. Worship of *Prana* is described in the Upanishads, and it is said that 'Prana is Brahman itself'. In ordinary conversation as well, the word *Prana* is used specifically to denote the power of consciousness. For

death, the word 'Prananta' (end of Prana) is generally used, and 'Prani' (living being) implies a possessor of life. Respiratory movement is also called *Prana*, because the anchor of life rests upon inhalation and exhalation, and from it, all the arts of life function. In reality, *Prana* is that power by virtue of which all limbs, organs, and nerves continuously execute their respective duties. The senses, mind, and intellect are also situated upon the support of *Prana*. The states of waking, dream, and deep sleep are also dependent upon *Prana*. Although the senses, mind, and intellect become inactive in deep sleep, *Prana* continues to execute its duties even then. The purpose behind calling inhalation-exhalation *Prana* is that the power that keeps the heart and lungs continuously active is the chief *Prana*.

Across all three states, the flow of the *Prana* power keeps happening inside the nerves of the entire body, and the specific duty of the said nerves is fixed. But the *Prana* flow always remains outward-turned. When it begins to turn inward, its flow must be understood as ascending through the path of the *Susumna Nadi* into the *Brahmarandhra*. Due to *Prana* ascending into the *Brahmarandhra*, *Samadhi* is accomplished, and in the states below that, one-pointedness of the mind is attained. Upon the cosmic *Prana* rising within the *Susumna*, external physical operations stop, to the extent that respiration and the beating of the heart also stop.

Through the practice of Yoga, upon the awakening of energy, the purification of the impurities of the nerves begins to happen, and becoming pure, they become smooth and easily passable. Then, no obstruction remains in the flow of energy inside them; transmission begins to happen like electricity through mere intent, and then, drawing from the nerves of the entire body, the *Pranas* easily ascend into the *Susumna*.

The aforementioned *Prana, Apana,* etc., are sub-divisions of that single *Prana* power. Based on its different functional activities, different names have been allocated to it, as is clear from the above Sutras.

Fourth Quarter (Chaturtha Pada)

1. Kundalini Pranavavarupini |

Kundalini is of the true form of Pranava (Om).

Maha Kundalini Prokta Parabrahma Svarupini |

Shabdabrahmamayi Devi Eka'nekakshara'kritih ||

— Yoga Kundalini Upanishad

("The Kundalini power is the true form of Parabrahman, the Great Goddess, filled with Sound-Brahman, meaning She is of the form of Pranava, manifesting in the shape of single and multi-lettered mantras.")

'A' = Sattva Guna, 'U' = Rajas Guna, 'M' = Tamas Guna, and the nasal sound (*Anunasika*) generated from the half-syllable is the indicator of the pure form of the Soul, which ultimately dissolves into *Brahman* like the resonant peeling of a bell. These themselves should be understood as the three and a half coils of the *Kundalini* power which are wrapped around the *Svayambhu Linga*.

2. Muladhare Prasupta Sa'tmashaktih |

That soul-power is lying asleep inside the Muladhara (Lies in the Static Form).

The sleeping *Kundalini* is described as holding her tail in her mouth and blocking the gate of the *Susumna*. In reality, this is a description of the spiritual power rendered in allegorical language.

3. Unnidrita Vishuddhe Tishthati Muktirupa Parashaktih |

Upon being awakened (When in Dynamic Form), that Supreme Power, who is the very embodiment of liberation, resides in the Vishuddha Chakra.

Upon the awakening of energy, the fetters of the three gunas loosen, and *Kundalini*, leaving behind her coils, becomes perfectly straight and serpentine. The rising of energy and its ascending through the *Susumna* into the skull comes within the direct experience of Yogis. Because its movement is felt to be serpentine, it is compared to a serpent.

Yavatsa Nidrita Dehe Tavajjivah Pashuryatha |

Gyanang Na Jayate Tavat Kotiyogavidhairapi ॥

("As long as She remains asleep inside the body, the human being behaves like an animal, because until then, even by performing millions of yogic methods, the knowledge of Brahman does not arise.")

Many people entertain the notion that *Kundalini* is a physical nerve. In reality, it is inferred that energy always resides in a dormant form (**Static Form**) inside the bulb (*Kanda*), and upon being awakened, emerging out from it (**Kinetic**), begins to ascend into the *Susumna* in the form of movement. The *Kanda* is the infinite reservoir of the said energy. Upon being awakened, its spiritual conscious true form begins to express itself in the body, mind, and speech.

4. Yogabhyasattivra Vairagyachchha ।

It awakens through the practice of Yoga and intense detachment.

5. Gyanabhaktibhyam Va ।

Or, through Knowledge and Devotion. It does not awaken through mere verbal knowledge; for this reason, hearing, contemplation, and profound meditation (*Shravana, Manana, Nididhyasana*) are required.

6. Pranayamadva ।

Or, through Pranayama.

Pranayama is the fourth limb of Ashtanga Yoga; hence, it is already included within the practice of Yoga in the fourth Sutra. Stating *Pranayama* here again as a separate method implies that the energy can awaken through the exclusive practice of *Pranayama* alone. It is said: '*Na Pranayamadparam Tapah*'—there is no penance greater than Pranayama. Here, by *Pranayama*, the retained retentions (*Sahit-Kumbhakas*) are meant, such as *Bhastrika, Ujjayi,* etc. Retention performed along with inhalation and exhalation is called *Sahit-Kumbhaka*.

7. Shaktipatadvishesena ।

It awakens with unique distinction through Shaktipat.

The unique distinction in *Shaktipat* is that without any effort on the part of the disciple, the energy awakens instantly by the grace of the Guru; otherwise, the practitioner has to engage in painful, arduous efforts over a long period just to awaken it, and even in that, the possibility of harm remains present.

8. Tattu Gurukripayaiva Labhyate ।

However, this is obtained strictly through the grace of the Guru.

9. Tatah Kriyavati Cha Bhavati Gyanavatvat ।

From that (Shaktipat), it becomes active (Kriyavati) as well, owing to the power being filled with inherent knowledge.

Two forms of *Kundalini* can be stated—*Avidya* (ignorance) and *Vidya* (knowledge). In the state of *Avidya*, lying asleep, She becomes the cause of bondage, and upon being awakened, assuming the state of *Vidya*, She becomes the bestower of liberation. Upon being awakened, She possesses three states—movement-free (*Kriya-rahita*), active (*Kriya-shila*), and the state of dissolution (*Layavastha*). In the movement-free state, the human tendency moves toward discrimination and detachment, but the active method of liberation does not commence. Yes, the energy continues to destroy past sins. Upon sins being destroyed, the journey to liberation commences. In *Samadhi* or the state of liberation, the energy dissolves into *Brahman*. Upon becoming active (*Kriyavati*), the practitioner experiences various *Asanas* of Hatha Yoga, *Pranayama, Bandhas, Mudras*, various stages of devotion, dancing, singing, loud chanting (*Udgeetha*), the sound of Pranava, chanting of names, and Mantra Yoga, alongside multiple actions of Gyana Yoga. The cause of these actions is that the energy is filled with inherent knowledge (*Gyanavati*). If the energy behaved in an insentient manner, its actions would not be so filled with consciousness and knowledge.

10. Kriyah Sthula-Linga-Karanabhedato Bahuvidhah ।

Actions and movements are of multiple kinds based on the classifications of the gross (Sthula), subtle (Linga), and causal (Karana) bodies.

There is a difference between the awakening of energy and its becoming active (*Kriyashila*). Only upon becoming active do physical and mental actions develop; it does not happen through mere awakening alone. The operations of the gross body, subtle body, and causal body are experienced separately. Uniform movements do not occur to all human beings; they are of multiple kinds based on everyone's distinct nature, temperament, and past impressions. All humans execute their own distinct movements; therefore, this is also called Spontaneous or Natural Yoga (*Sahaja Yoga*), and no possibility of harm exists for anyone from this. Generally, it has been observed that those who practice forced *Pranayama* or *Shirshasana* fall ill. The cause of this is that the said actions are not in harmony with their nature. When the energy becomes active, natural movements develop, and they are perfectly in harmony with the practitioner's body, mind, and *Prana* based on location, time, and season.

11. Kayika Vachika Manasikah ।

Actions are of three types—physical (Kayika), vocal (Vachika), and mental (Manasika).

12. Ta Nechchhatantrah Samskaratantratvat ।

They are not under the control of personal will, owing to being under the control of past impressions (Samskaras).

Whether it is the will of the Guru or the will of the disciple, the movements are not subordinate to anyone's personal will.

13. Shaktitantratvadva ।

Or, consider them under the control of the energy itself. Because when the momentum of energy arises, various types of movements begin to happen automatically. Secondly, the energy has been stated to be filled with knowledge; hence, She is independent.

14. Tadvegastu Na Tatha ।

However, its intense momentum is also not completely outside control in that manner—it is not so.

Because the intense momentum can be moderated or stopped through will. If a practitioner experiences the momentum out in a public gathering, he can stop his momentum there through his will. Movements are ordained to be performed always in a lonely place and a closed room, not in a public gathering; unlike the custom started nowadays by certain figures to display emotions and turn it into a spectacle by dancing while performing community singing. Performing movements in a public gathering causes an inappropriate transmission and depletion of energy, as stated previously.

15. Tatah Pranapanayorutthanam ।

By performing movements, the rising of both Prana and Apana takes place.

It has been stated previously that the rising of the *Prana* power happens through the awakening of energy. Here, it is revealed that as a result of the movements being performed, the rising of both *Prana* and *Apana* takes place. Therefore, the longer the practice is performed and the more movements occur, the faster the rising of *Prana-Apana* happens, yielding rapid progress.

16. Susumnang Vrajati ।

The energy begins to enter into the Susumna.

17. Chakrani Bhinatti ।

She pierces through the chakras.

18. Tato Nadishuddhih ।

From that, the purification of the nerves takes place.

All nerves are connected to the *Susumna*. They emerge from it through the sequence of branches and sub-branches, spreading into all limbs and organs; therefore, the energy, entering into the *Susumna* and piercing the chakras, spreads forcefully across the entire network of nerves—just as

water filled in a reservoir spreads forcefully into the pipes of every house, lane, and market in the city. If there is any type of blockage inside any pipe, it gets eliminated automatically by the force of the water.

19. Pranamaye Sanchalayati Pranam ।

She executes the transmission of Prana everywhere within the Pranamaya sheath.

Upon *Nadi-Shuddhi* being accomplished, due to the entire network of nerves becoming pure, transmission of *Prana* happens forcefully everywhere inside each branch and sub-branch, and the *Pranamaya* sheath becomes filled with energy from the toenails to the crown of the head. The name of this state is **Ghata Avastha** (the pot-state). Due to the commencement of movements, it is initially called the **Arambha Avastha** (the commencement-state). In the *Arambha* state, due to the energy becoming upward-moving, the senses begin to turn inward; and upon the *Pranamaya* sheath becoming full of *Prana* by the force of energy, it is called *Ghata* state.

20. Tada Pranayamasiddhishcha ।

Then, the perfection of Pranayama is achieved.

21. Sa Chaturvidha ।

That perfection of Pranayama is fourfold.

22. Pranasyapane'panasya Prane Yoga Ubhayorgati-Rodhashcha ।

23. Kevala Pranavileene Chaturthah ।

The union of Prana into Apana, the union of Apana into Prana, and the cessation of the movement of both. The fourth is Kevala Pranayama, in which the dissolution of Prana takes place.

As the Lord stated to Arjun in the Gita while describing various sacrifices:

Apane Juhvati Pranam Prane'panam Tathapare ।

Pranapana Gati Ruddha Pranayama Parayanah ||

Apare Niyataharah Pranan Praneshu Juhvati |

Sarve'pyete Yagnavido Yagnakshapitakalmashah ||

("Some offer Prana into Apana, others offer Apana into Prana, some execute Pranayama by stopping the movement of both Prana and Apana, and others, restricting their food, offer the Pranas into the Pranas. All these are knowers of sacrifice, whose sins have been destroyed through sacrifice.")

The aforementioned four types of *Pranayamas* do not imply the ordinary respiratory operations of inhalation, exhalation, and forced retention; however, their perfection can be achieved via inhalation-exhalation, and upon the energy awakening, they are perfected even without taking the support of inhalation-exhalation. The operations of all four are explained below. Readers must have understood from the aforementioned verses that real *Pranayama* happens through the union of *Prana* and *Apana*. "Where and how are these two powers united?" This alone is the core matter to be understood.

The location of the *Apana* power is the anus and generative organ; meaning, *Apana* resides close to the base chakra (*Adhara Chakra*) and its movement is directed downward. The *Prana* power functions in the region above the heart. Uniting both, they must be made to enter into the opening of the *Susumna*. The gate to enter into the *Susumna* is located at the station of the *Kundalini*, which is situated between the *Muladhara* and *Svadhisthana*; meaning, both *Prana* and *Apana* have to be drawn and united at this exact location, from which, combining together, they enter the *Susumna*. Then, the perfection of *Ghata Avastha* is achieved, and by a slight effort or mere intent of the Yogi, the flow of *Prana* begins to happen easily wherever intended.

1. To offer the *Prana* power into the *Apana*, the *Prana* will have to be brought down and taken into the base chakra to be united with *Apana*. This action is perfected through inhalation (*Puraka*) and internal retention (*Kumbhaka*). The breath has to be inhaled into the lungs slowly but with pressure. Then, contracting the throat via *Jalandhara Bandha*, the air is forcefully pressed downward. Through

this action, after some practice, the *Prana* power, drawing from all the nerves of the upper region into the *Ida-Pingala* nerves, begins to descend downward and gradually accumulates at the *Muladhara Chakra* near the bulb. There, the Yogi has already stopped the *Apana* power via *Mula Bandha* by adopting *Sidhasana* or contracting the anus. In this manner, the union of both is executed there. This is the offering of *Prana* into *Apana*.

2. Then, through exhalation (*Rechaka*), the breath is slowly exhaled, and executing *Mula Bandha* and drawing the abdomen toward the back via *Uddiyana Bandha*, the *Apana* is drawn upward from the lower nerves to be united with *Prana*. In this manner, their union happens again. This is offering *Apana* into *Prana*. Upon uniting both in the manner stated above, when *Prana* enters the *Susumna*, the perfection of authentic *Pranayama* is achieved.

3. Thereafter, executing external retention (*Bahya Kumbhaka*), the movement of inhalation-exhalation is stopped, due to which both *Prana* and *Apana*, abandoning their respective external operations, begin to turn inward (just as happens due to choking before death), and both, abandoning their respective individual forms, begin to dissolve. This itself is the third sacrifice in the form of the cessation of the movement of *Prana-Apana*.

4. Upon the fourth **Kevala Kumbhaka** being perfected, the inhalation-exhalation begins to stop automatically under any condition, and due to the respiratory movement being ceased, the cessation of the *Prana* power takes place. Due to the cessation of all five Pranas, the entire mechanical operation of the body stops, the cosmic rising of *Prana* takes place, and *Samadhi* begins to be accomplished. Such Yogis, restricting their diet (*Mitahara*), enjoy the bliss of *Samadhi* over a long period. This itself is offering the Pranas into the Pranas. The difference between this fourth and the third is that in *Kevala Kumbhaka*, *Prana* will dissolve completely across all chakras all at once.

In all four methods, *Prana* ascends into the *Susumna*. Upon the energy awakening and becoming active, all four types of *Pranayamas* begin to be perfected without any forced effort; meaning, without even taking the

support of the movement of inhalation-exhalation. Adi Shankaracharya Ji has also given a beautiful description of *Kevala Kumbhaka* in the *Yogatara Vali*, which is उद्धृत below for the readers' perusal:

Bandhatrayabhyasavipakajatam, Vivarjitang Rechakapurakabhyam ।

Vishoshayanting Vishayapravaham, Vidyam Bhaje Kevalakumbharupam ॥

Pratyahritah Kevalakumbhakena, Prabuddhakundalyupabhuktashesah ।

Pranah Pratichina Pathena Mandam, Viliyate Vishnupadantarale ॥

("I worship (practice) that science of the form of Kevala Kumbhaka, which arises from the mature stage of practicing all three Bandhas—Mula, Uddiyana, and Jalandhara—which is completely devoid of inhalation and exhalation, and which dries up the streams of all sensory objects.")

("The Prana drawn through Kevala Kumbhaka, which remains as a remnant after being consumed by the awakened Kundalini, slowly dissolves via the rear path of the Susumna into the interior space of the nature of Vishnu's feet; meaning, ascending into the Sahasrara, it dissolves into Parabrahman.")

24. Tada Pashchimato Vedhachchittalayah ।

Then, due to the piercing of the rear path of the Susumna, the state of dissolution of the mind (Chitta-Laya) arrives.

25. Siddha Mantranamaptir-Matrika-Sambodhat ।

Due to the awakening of the Matrika power, the attainment of perfected mantras takes place.

The *Matrika* power is that form of *Kundalini* in which, along with the formulation of sounds and words, the alphabet from 'Akar' to 'Kshakar' expresses itself through vocal speech (*Vaikhari Vani*). For this reason, *Kundalini* is also called *Sarasvati*. Upon *Sarasvati* being perfected, the development of mantras and words happens spontaneously, and the power to deliver discourses or compose poetry awakens inside the Yogi.

26. Ashtangayogasiddhishcha ।

An the perfection of Ashtanga Yoga is achieved.

All eight limbs—*Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi*—become gradually fortified. If the force of movements continues for 12 hours, then 1 hour of *Dharana*, 5 minutes of *Dhyana*, and 25 seconds of *Samadhi* are achieved—such is the estimate. In accordance with this, the lower limbs also become sequentially fortified.

27. Mahayogadayo Va ।

Or, it can be said that the dawn of Mahayoga takes place.

28. Nrityati Gayati Hasati Rodati Cha ।

And the practitioner dances, sings, sometimes laughs, and sometimes weeps.

29. Pranavadinanamochcharanam Ganam Kirtanam Cha ।

He executes the vocal utterance of names like Pranava, singing, and kirtan.

30. Divyabhavairmatto Bhavati ।

31. Raudradibhashairapi Sampannobhavati ।

He becomes intoxicated in divine emotions and becomes coupled with emotions like the fierce (Raudra) as well.

Fierce (*Raudra*), wondrous (*Adbhuta*), romantic/erotic (*Shringar*), comic (*Hasya*), heroic (*Veer*), pathetic (*Karuna*), fearful (*Bhayanak*), loathsome (*Veebhatsa*), and love-filled devotion (*Shanta*)—these are the 9 emotions (*Navarasas*). The said 9 types of emotions manifest occasionally. Apart from these, the Shiva-emotion, divine-emotion, and Brahma-emotion also take place. Upon these emotions arriving, the human being appears like a madman. This itself is the state of the enlightened one (*Gyani*), because in this state, individual life-consciousness (*Jivabhava*) becomes minimal or close to non-existent.

32. Bhaktya Paraya'visto Bhavati ।

He enters into the intense absorption of supreme devotion (Para-Bhakti).

33. Karoti Siddha Darshanamistadevadarshananchcha |

He perceives the visions of perfected masters (Siddhas) and his chosen deity (Ishta-Deva).

34. Urdhvaretashchha Bhavati |

And he becomes an Urdhvareta (one whose creative energy flows upward).

It is known to everyone that absolute celibacy (*Brahmacharya*) is exceptionally vital for spiritual progress, and protecting the creative fluid/ semen is itself called *Brahmacharya*. However, "how is the creative fluid protected?" is a matter comprehended by very few. Frequently, doctors state that stopping the urge of lust to protect semen can cause multiple types of physical ailments. This implies that after being formed, semen possesses a tendency to exit outward, and stopping it causes harm. However, forming and destroying semen in an unnatural manner and unnecessary volume due to excessive sensory indulgence causes even greater harm. Such humans invite dangerous diseases like tuberculosis.

It is certain that forming semen in an unnatural manner during sensory indulgence strikes a heavy blow to the physical tissues of the body, because their essence is forcefully extracted. But if the semen that is formed naturally can be protected, the benefit of absolute *Brahmacharya* can be reaped. According to the opinion of doctors, the generation of semen happens in this manner: when a man experiences the urge of lust, the flow of his blood moves into the glands of the testes. There, via the chemical action of a fluid emerging from those glands, the red cells of the blood are transformed into the white sperm cells of semen, which are called **spermatozoa** in English.

The aforementioned white cells of semen possess the reproductive capacity. If they are ejected outward, no harm occurs, because their natural purpose is to exit outward and cause conception inside the female uterus. If a man forcefully blocks it mentally while remaining filled with lust, possibilities of nocturnal emission and spermatorrhea exist. Under such

conditions, what is the meaning of practicing celibacy? This is worth considering. Our seers state that semen is nothing but the *Prana* power itself, and when semen is destroyed, the *Prana* power depletes. Upon the rising of the *Apana* power, due to its union with the fire of *Udana*, the *Prana* power of the semen becomes upward-moving. The semen of such a Yogi does not drop, and even if it drops during marital life, his core *Brahmacharya* is not destroyed.

Upon the '*Vajroli*' mudra being perfected, due to the force of *Udana*, semen that has dropped down into the organ during a nocturnal emission or dropped outward during intercourse is drawn back upward. Going upward, it cannot return and re-enter the seminal vesicles or bladder; rather, through the heat of the *Udana* power, it mixes into the blood located at the perineum (*Yoni-sthana*), and the momentum of *Prana* executes an upward flow into the *Susumna*. Yogis have considered this action as the union of *Raja* and *Varya*:

Yonisthane Mahakshetre Japabandhukasannibham |

Rajo Vasati Jantunam Devitattvam Samahitam ||

Rajasoretaso Yogadrajayoga Iti Smritah | — Yoga Shikha Upanishad

("In the great field of the perineum, raja of the color of a hibiscus flower resides inside the body of every living being. It is called the Goddess element. From the union of that raja and semen, Raja Yoga is obtained; meaning, the fruit of the union of both is Raja Yoga.")

In the middle region between the anus and the generative organ, above the perineal raphe, lies a triangular soft region which is called the *Yoni-sthana* (perineum). When semen ascends there, heat is generated, which is indicative of the chemical action of semen and *raja*.

Galitopi Yada Binduh Samprapto Yonimandale |

Jvalitopi Yatha Binduh Sampraptashchha Hutashanam ||

Vrajatyurdhvam Hathachchhaktia Nibaddho Yonimudraya |

Sa Eva Dvividho Binduh Panduro Lohitastatha ||

Panduram Shukramityahu Lohitakhyam Maharajah |

Vidruma Druma Sankashang Yonisthane Sthitang Rajah ||

Shashi Sthane Vasedbindustayoraikyang Sudurlabham ||

— Yoga Chudamani Upanishad, Dhyana Bindu Upanishad

("Even when dropped, when the bindu (semen) reaches the perineum, it is like a drop falling into a blazing fire; it is forcefully drawn back upward by the energy through the practice of Yoni Mudra. That bindu is of two types —white and red. The white is called shukra (semen) and the red is called maharaja (raja). The raja, resembling red coral, resides in the perineum, and the semen resides in the lunar station of the seminal reservoir. The union of these two is exceptionally rare." Here, Yoni implies the aforementioned perineal region of the male body.)

In reality, semen is the gross vehicle of *Prana* and *Ojas* (vital splendor). Upon *Prana* or *Ojas* moving upward, if semen drops occasionally, it does not create an obstacle in *Brahmacharya*. Such Yogis, while fulfilling the duties of householder life, practice authentic celibacy. All ancient seers like Vashistha and Yagyavalkya were householders. It is said in the Prashna Upanishad:

Pranam Ete Praskandanti Diva Ratya Samyujyate |

Brahmacharyameva Tadratrau Ratya Samyujyate ||

— Prashna Upanishad, 1-13

("Those who engage in intercourse during the day destroy their Prana; and those who engage in intercourse during the night remain strictly in celibacy.") Because during the day, the solar Prana power operates, which is absent at night.

Upon the *Kundalini* power awakening, due to *Prana-Apana* becoming naturally upward-moving, no obstacle arises in their celibacy, because the upward flow of their *Prana* power remains continuous. Those whose *Kundalini* energy has not awakened, if they forcefully draw the semen upward through practices, it fails to mix with *raja* and exits outward along with urine. For this reason, it is written in the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* that without the *Kundalini* awakening, *Vajroli* and *Khechari* mudras are not perfected.

Such Yogis are called *Urdhvareta*. Ordinary people also derive benefit from protecting semen, because a minor upward flow of their *Prana* and *Ojas* does take place. To practice celibacy, it is highly vital that the flaw of lust must not be allowed to arise within the mind at all. Once the mental flaw arises, the formation of semen is mandatory, and after it is formed, protecting it is extremely difficult.

35. Tato Khecharisiddhih ।

From that (becoming an Urdhvareta), the perfection of Khechari is achieved.

Khechari means the movement of *Prana* within the inner sky (*Brahmarandhra*).

36. Vitaraga Vishayatvam ।

The state of being free from passion toward sensory objects (Vitaraga-Vishayatvam) takes place.

All five afflictions become thinned, and the momentum of a human being's attraction, aversion, fear, lust, anger, and delusion softens and becomes depleted. Ultimately, all impurities are destroyed, because due to the *Pranas* moving upward, the senses turn inward and the practitioner becomes detached from sensory objects.

37. Suryenduvahni Dipashikha Vidyut Khadyot Nakshatradini Jyotishi Pashyati ।

He perceives lights resembling the sun, moon, fire, the flame of a lamp, electricity, fireflies, and stars.

The said visions happen in three distinct ways: (1) **Bahirdrishti**—externally with eyes wide open; (2) **Madhyadrishti**—internally in meditation with eyes closed, coupled with the triad of witness, vision, and object seen; and (3) **Antardrishti**—in a state resembling *Samadhi*.

38. Brahmani Tadabhivyaktikarani Shruteth ।

These are indicators of the manifestation of Brahman, as verified by the Shruti.

A description of these is found in the Shvetashvatara Upanishad, stating that such visions belong to the conscious Soul or *Brahman*. The *Atman* and *Brahman* are unmanifest, but their said manifestation happens solely due to the attribute (*Upadhi*) of the mind.

39. Arambha Ghata Parichaya Nishpattibhumikopalabdhih ।

The attainment of the stages of Arambha, Ghata, Parichaya, and Nishpatti is achieved.

- **Arambha State** – The senses of action, senses of knowledge, and the internal instrument turn away from outward modifications and begin to move inward.
- **Ghata State** – Piercing the *Susumna*, *Prana* becomes stabilized and full from the toenails to the crown of the head.
- **Parichaya State** – Due to *Prana* becoming stabilized within the *Brahmarandhra Sahasrara*, the *Parichaya* (acquaintance) state occurs, because the direct acquaintance of the Soul happens there.
- **Nishpatti State** – This is the term allocated to the state of liberation-while-living (*Jivanmukti*).

40. Pratibhadividhutayah ।

Perfections like Pratibha (intuitive dawn of omniscience), etc., arrive.

41. Adhikari Bhedato Na Niyamah ।

Based on the variation of the seeker, there is no absolute rule that these symptoms must manifest uniformly in everyone.

42. Ta Natmani Chitta Dharmatvat ।

Because they are the characteristics of the mind, they do not exist inside the Atman.

All the aforementioned states do not belong to the Soul, because all these are characteristics strictly of the mind (*Chitta*).

43. Nitya Shuddha Buddha Mukta Svabhavasya Na Bhumikatvam ।

The Atman, whose true nature is eternally pure, enlightened, and free, does not undergo stages.

44. Atmakhyatireva ।

In the progressive sequential attainment of the stages, only the conscious light of the Self increases.

"What are the stages?" The answer is: "The progressively increasing light of the Atman upon the canvas of the mind."

45. Chitta Samyogapatteshchenna Iti Na ।

If a doubt is raised that "stages do not happen in the Atman, they are only the reflection of the Self upon the mind"—in this tenet, an actual conjunction of the mind with the Atman will have to be accepted; hence, this tenet is incorrect. To answer this, it is said—No, because:

46. Samyagannabandhah ।

Conjunction does not cause bondage.

47. Atmani Chidanandarupatve Dvayorbhedat ।

Because the Atman is of the true form of Consciousness and Bliss, and because there is an absolute distinction between the Atman and the mind, bondage cannot occur.

The *Atman* is conscious, the mind is insentient. A core relationship or conjunction between the two is impossible; therefore, a conjunction-born bondage does not happen. The *Atman* is unattached; hence, the possibility of stages inside it is non-existent, and they are characteristics strictly of the mind. Then, "how does the reflection of the Self occur upon it?" The answer to this is:

48. Tattu Tadatmya Mithya Gyanamavivekat ।

This identity (Tadatmya) is false, illusory knowledge arising from the lack of discrimination (Aviveka).

49. Asatisatkhyatirva ।

Or, say that it is a perception of 'existence' in that which is 'non-existent'.

An actual identity between the *Atman* and the mind does not exist, but such a perception appears.

50. Samadhau Pratyagatnabhigamattannivrttistannivrttih ।

In Samadhi, upon all modifications being completely ceased, due to the direct realization of the Inner Self, that lack of discrimination is eliminated permanently—it is eliminated permanently.

GUIDELINES FOR SADHAKAS

It is not right to take a rigid rule for following; one should only keep them in mind and maintain caution regarding food and behavior in accordance with one's internal spiritual movements or kriyas. The rest of all work is systematically and accurately executed by this Divine Mother, Bhagawati, Herself. Nowadays, the public's interest toward Yoga-Sadhana is continuously increasing, consequently, many books related to spiritual practice are now becoming available. But among those spiritual texts, this small-bodied booklet holds its own distinct importance. In the massive volumes related to Yoga-Sadhana, minor but absolutely essential matters for daily practice are scattered here and there. They are not gathered in one place, and sorting and compiling them out of the dense jungle of huge volumes is also not easy. All those matters related to practice have been compiled and gathered which are highly essential for a practitioner to know and understand. Due to this, practitioners receive great help with very little effort, and this is the unique feature of this booklet.

The meaning of this verse is that Mantra, Laya, Hatha, and Rajayoga are sequentially the sub-stages of which, that single Mahayoga is thus spoken of in four variations as four-fold.

The description of this Mahayoga is found in the main Upanishads merely by hints and in detail in the miscellaneous Upanishads. But this small booklet is not for its analytical interpretation, rather it is just a brief indicator in the form of information for practitioners. This Yoga is also called Siddha Yoga or Sahaja Yoga. Saying so is accurate because in this, the disciple merely has to remain a witness through the internal power of the Guru, and keep observing the stages of the aforementioned four yogas which naturally come into spontaneous experience across all three bodies, five koshas (sheaths), and three states of consciousness. Upon moving forward with faith, self-realization begins to occur, and when faith transforms into conviction, then the practitioner, with a steady mind and having fulfilled their purpose, becomes established in that truth through the practice of Rajayoga. This is the ultimate stage of Self-knowledge.

There is a theoretical difference between Yoga philosophy and Vedanta philosophy, but there is no difference between Yoga and Knowledge (Jnana) regarding the means of practice. This is why everywhere in the texts of Vedanta scripture, Yoga has been accepted as the means for attaining the restrained state of the mind and for removing distractions through restraint. The practitioner should listen to and reflect upon the texts regarding Yoga and Knowledge, and taking the help of Yoga, should experience the oneness of Yoga and Knowledge by attaining Samadhi through profound meditation (Nididhyasana).

The Necessity of Yoga for Knowledge

The goal of human birth is the attainment of liberation, or Moksha. Rite Jnananna Muktih means that without knowledge, liberation cannot be attained. Without yoga, knowledge also does not grant liberation, and yoga too is fruitless without knowledge.

Yogahinah katham jnanam mokshadam bhavatiha bho | Yogopi jnanahinastu na kshamemoksha-karmani | Tasmadjnanam cha yogam cha mumukshurabhyaset dridham || (**Yoga-Shikha**)

The meaning of this passage is: O Brahman! Without yoga, how can knowledge grant liberation in this world? And yoga also, without knowledge, does not possess the capacity to grant liberation. Therefore, a seeker of liberation must firmly practice both knowledge and yoga.

Bahyakulachittanam vicharattattvadhihi | Yogo mukhyamstatastasmad dhyadypasta nashyati || (**Panchadashi-Dhyana Deep 6/122**)

This means that those with a highly agitated mind do not gain elemental knowledge merely by analytical thought; therefore, for them, yoga is the primary means, by which the agitation of the mind and flaws of the intellect are destroyed.

Realization of the Self is what is called Knowledge. Jnanam yatra nija rupam kaivalyam paramam padam. One who has known their own true form, that itself is the state of Kaivalya. Man does not know the Soul; he considers this body alone to be his true form. His bodily identification has become so firm in the body that the experience of the Soul's existence separate from the body never occurs in his daily life routine. Even if he ever separates from the body, he begins to consider the mind or intellect as the Soul. The body is perishable; both mind and intellect change from moment to moment. The Soul is ever identical, uniform, the embodiment of bliss; it never changes nor is it ever destroyed. He identifies himself with the body and fears death, even though he is not destroyed with the destruction of the body, and no effect comes upon the Soul from the impairment of the mind and intellect. With the cooperation of the mind, he experiences pleasure and pain and remains trapped in the web of various types of desires, and when he becomes free from these, he desires

ultimate peace. The method of separating the Soul from the body, mind, and intellect is called Yoga.

Tada drashtuh svarupevashthanam (Patanjaldarshan 1) means that then the witness gets established in its own true nature. Note that the Soul is called the seer, the world is the object seen, and the internal instrument as well as the external instruments are the means of seeing. The relation of the scene and the seer is relative in terms of subject and object.

Tam svachhariratpravrihenmunjadisheekam dhairyena | Tam vidyachhukramamritam tam vidya dhukramamritamiti || (Kathopanishad)

This means that one must separate that Soul from one's own body with patience, just as a stalk is separated from the Munja grass. Know that alone to be imperishable and immortal.

The method for doing this is also stated as follows: Yachhedvanmanasi prajnasntayachhejnyanatmani | Jnanamatmani mahati niyachhettayachhechhhantaatmani | Jagrata prapya varanibodhata || (Kathopanishad)

This means that a wise person should merge the speech and the five senses into the mind, the mind into the intellect, the intellect into the great self, and merge that into the peaceful Soul. Arise, awake, and know it by approaching the excellent teachers.

Gurukrupa (The Grace of the Guru)

How is this Yoga attained? In the Yogashikhopanishad, Lord Shiva says to Lord Brahma: Pashchatpunyena labhate siddhena saha sangatim | Tatra siddhasya kripaya yogo bhavati nanyatha ||

The meaning of this verse is that after the merits of many births, by the influence of virtue, companionship with a Siddha is attained, then by the grace of that Siddha, yoga happens, not otherwise.

The grace of a Siddha Mahatma, which happens through sight, touch, or mantra awakening, is called Shaktipat or Maha-Deeksha. This is why the name of this Yoga is famous as Siddha, Sahaja, or Mahayoga.

Darshanat sparshanat shabdat kripaya shishya dehaikai | Janayed ya samavesham shambhavam sa hi daishikah || (Yogavasistha)

This means that one who gracefully manifests the Shambhavi absorption into the disciple's body through sight, touch, or sound, he alone is the guide.

Guro ralokamatrena sparshat sambhashanadapi | Sadyah sanjna bhavajjanto deeksha sa shambhavi mata || (Vayaviya Samhita)

This means that by the mere sight, touch, or speech of the Guru, a kind of immediate realization arises in the living being, giving a direct experience that a special type of power has manifested inside them. That itself is considered Shambhavi initiation.

Nana margastu dushprapyam kaivalyam paramam padam | Siddhamargena labhyeta nanyatha padmasambhava || (Yo. Shi.)

This means that the ultimate state of Kaivalya is difficult to attain even through various pathways. O Brahma Ji! This is obtained only through the path of the Siddhas, not otherwise.

Through Shaktipat, the Guru awakens the Kundalini Shakti of the disciple. Between the anus and the genitals is the place of the origin, which is also called the Shikhisthan. Above the Yonisthan, near the spinal

column, there is an oval muscle. Above it, at the navel center, there is a knot which is called Ganglion impar in English, and that muscle is called Kanda in Sanskrit. From this knot emerge the Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna nadis. The first two are outside the spinal column, which are called Sympathetic Columns, and the third, Sushumna (Spinal Cord), is inside. The flow of life force energy passes through Sushumna and reaches the Brahmarandhra, then Samadhi begins to occur.

In the Sushumna, there are six places which can be called the points of origin of the nadis, and those nadis come outside and form a network. In English, they are called Plexuses, and yogis call them Chakras or Padmas. Near the anus is the Muladhara chakra of the earth element; near the genitals is the Svadhisthana chakra of the water element; near the navel is the Manipura chakra of the fire element; in the heart is the Anahata chakra of the air element; in the throat is the Vishuddha chakra of the space element; and between the eyebrows is the Ajna chakra associated with the mind. Above in the head is the Sahasrara (Cerebrum).

When the life force flows, the said power pierces all six chakras and ascends into the Sahasrara. Then, taking the mind along with the properties associated with the five elements—smell, taste, form, touch, and sound—it dissolves along with the intellect into its respective causal source, and seedless Samadhi occurs. This Samadhi is of two types: internal and external. Realized sages always maintain external Samadhi. Then, resolutions and doubts in the mind are completely uprooted, desires dissolve, and by holding onto the self-state, supreme satisfaction and peace arise. The light of self-bliss spreads. All the dualistic webs of pleasure and pain of the world are destroyed. That wise person, even while performing actions, is called liberated while living. The water of the world-ocean does not touch him, just like a lotus leaf.

In the Kanda, the life force remains dormant (Potential). As long as it is asleep, the senses along with the mind and intellect remain outward-turned, and upon awakening, they begin to become inward-turned. This power alone is called the Kundalini Shakti. This is a conscious power, and despite being one, it pervades all living beings.

Ya devi sarvabhuteshu chitirupena samsthita | Namastasye 3 Namonama || (Du. Sa.) This means: Salutations to the Goddess who is situated in the form of consciousness in all living beings, salutations, salutations, repeatedly salutations.

Upon awakening, that power begins to enter the Sushumna like electricity. Perfected Gurus awaken it and open the path of liberation for the disciple, showing immense grace, the debt of which the disciple can never repay in any manner, because this knowledge is priceless. Worldly objects cannot match its value.

Mechanics of the Awakened Life Force

Upon the awakening of Kundalini, the life force energy begins to function automatically. This power flows through the nadis (the nervous system) like an electric current, but its unique feature is that it is not inert like electricity; rather, it knows and understands everything. Therefore, it is a mistake to consider merely the air moving in and out of the lungs as Prana. To the practitioners of Siddha Yoga, the flow of life force energy becomes quickly understandable because it is a matter of direct experience. Prana is an extremely subtle power. Its experience occurs in all three bodies: gross, subtle, and causal. It connects the gross body with the subtle, and the subtle body with the causal body. For this reason, by mastering Prana, the senses, mind, and intellect all come under control automatically.

The gross body is called the Annamaya Kosha; because it is the place of the movement of Prana, the power flowing through the nadis is called the Pranamaya Kosha; the sheath associated with the mind is the Manomaya; the sheath of the intellect is the Vijnanamaya; and thereafter, the state of deep sleep and the causal body is called the Anandamaya Kosha. The work of connecting all five sheaths with one another belongs to the life force energy. Just as the life force energy makes the gross body active and capable of knowledge, it similarly creates waves of thoughts, doubts, and desires in the mind and inspires the intellect. The impressions that keep getting recorded on the canvas of the intellect form the memory in this birth and create the body for the future birth.

This means that in the causal body of this birth, there is a storehouse of the impressions of past births, and the said impressions also remain stored under the control of the life force energy. Therefore, at the time of Samadhi, due to the control over Prana, the accumulation of impressions in the causal body also becomes weak, and truth-bearing wisdom (Ritambhara Pragya) manifests. In this manner, the Kundalini Shakti

awakens and gradually loosens the three bodies—gross, subtle, and causal—and separates the Soul just like a stalk from the Munja grass.

Tasmatrogam tamenadau sadhanasya niyamabhyaset | Mumukshubhi prananjaya kartavyo mokshahetave || (**Yo. Shi.**) **Therefore, the practitioner should first practice this Yoga daily. Those who desire liberation should master Prana for the sake of liberation.**

Beejam chittavrikshasya pranyaspandana vasane | Ekasmishcha tayo ksheene kshiyam dve nashyata || (**Yo. Va.**) **Unsteady Prana and desires are the seeds of the mind-tree. Upon the destruction of even one of these two, both are destroyed immediately.**

Faith (Shraddha)

It is necessary to have faith and devotion in all three: the power of the practice, the Guru, and God. This power understands everything, therefore one should never insult or think ill of the power and the Guru, and one should have faith, devotion, and knowledge toward God. The more faith and devotion one has toward the Guru, the sooner this power will bear fruit.

Yasya deve para bhaktiryatha deve tatha gurau | Tasyaite kathitahyrathah prakashante mahatmanah | | (Shveta. Up.)

The meaning of this scripture is that one who has supreme devotion toward God, and as toward God, so toward the Guru, to that great soul, the meanings of what has been said become illuminated.

If for any reason disrespect toward the power and the Guru, or doubt or an attitude of atheism arises in the mind, then at that very moment, the actions will stall, and there will be an apprehension of obstacles arising in progress. Knowing this, one must carefully eliminate doubts and other obstacles that manifest during the initial practice.

Place (Sthan)

The place for practice should be clean, solitary, and pleasant. It is proper to designate a separate room in the house for practice. Servants, children, or other persons should not be allowed to enter it; however, there is no harm if another practitioner enters. If possible, that room should be used only for practice; it is better if one's sleeping and sitting room is also separate. The atmosphere of the room where practice is done becomes filled with power, and by using it for other works, that atmosphere becomes polluted. The place should be cool in summer and warm in winter. There should be no kind of foul odor nearby.

That place should be kept fragrant by burning incense or incense sticks. Flower pots, bouquets, and fragrant flowers are helpful for practice. There should be no smoke in the room. That place must be protected from mosquitoes, bedbugs, fleas, ants, insects, etc. The floor should be washed or smeared with cow dung and mud. There should be no cobwebs or dirt on the walls. The room should be well-painted, clean, and pleasing to the mind. In the room, nothing should be kept except one's seat and pictures of the Guru, chosen deity, etc. A comfortable, soft seat, five to six feet long and wide, should be laid down by doubling a blanket or placing a mattress underneath and spreading a clean sheet or blanket over it. A blanket is better than a mattress. One blanket for covering in winter and a sheet even in summer should be kept nearby.

At the time of practice, minimum clothing should be worn. Instead of a dhoti, a loincloth should be kept, and the kurta etc. should be loose, but sitting bare-bodied and wrapping a sheet for cold is good. A handkerchief should be kept near the seat for wiping the nose or spitting, which must be washed daily. At the time of practice, no lamp, candle, or light of any kind should be kept.

Diet and Lifestyle (Ahaar-Vihar)

One's wearing clothes should be kept separate. One's clothes should not be given to others and others' clothes should not be used by oneself. One's sleeping bed should also be kept separate. Food should be moderate and wholesome according to preference. Just as eating excessively is harmful, similarly, fasting or eating nothing also becomes an obstacle in practice. Keeping one-fourth of the stomach empty, the unctuous and sweet food that is consumed for the pleasure of Lord Shiva is called moderate diet, or Mitahar.

It is not proper to eat food multiple times a day. Eating twice a day is proper. If one feels very hungry, one can have some snacks at noon.

Wheat, rice, barley, shashtika rice, milk, ghee, sugar candy, honey, dry ginger, cardamom, pointed gourd, bottle gourd, eggplant, sponge gourd,

spinach, mung dal, and arhar dal are wholesome foods. In the initial practice, cow's milk and ghee are highly beneficial. Nutritious, sweet, and unctuous substances, cow's milk, and foods that nourish the bodily tissues, are pleasing to the mind, and are suitable for yoga should be consumed.

Food that is bitter, sour, pungent, overly salty, hot, pickles, oil, mustard, alcohol, fish, meat, curd, buttermilk, asafoetida, onion, garlic, reheated food, dry, causing burning sensations, or stale is forbidden. Do not take them.

The signs of a practitioner devoted to yoga are described as: Mitahari vratachari yogi yoga-parayanah || (Bindu.) This means that leaving aside bitter and sour substances, a milk-drinker, well-settled, moderate in diet, and a noble practitioner becomes fully devoted to yoga.

It is forbidden for a yogi to sit near a fire or heat, travel excessively via long walks on foot, perform heavy exercises, bathe early in the morning during winter, or distress the body through severe fasting. After rising from practice, take a bath with lukewarm water. Excessive talking, restiveness, and engaging in arguments are detrimental to spiritual practice.

Celibacy must be maintained; this is highly necessary for a practitioner. Celibacy is the very life force. By the destruction of semen, life force energy gets depleted.

However, during the course of kriyas, householders should behave according to the rules of moderation. Suppressing the urge completely is also not proper, which has been described as a fault. For the success of kriyas, if desire arises, in such a state, the force of lust must be restrained through dispassion because at the time of the piercing of the Svadhisthana chakra, there is often a temporary increase in desire.

Other Matters Related to Spiritual Practice

The time for practice is early morning and evening. Midnight is also an excellent time. A fixed time can be decided for performing the kriyas, but one must sit regularly at the same time with pure intent. The duration of practice can extend continuously for three to four hours at a time. A note here indicates that for the perfection of goals, it is written so in the scriptures.

The seat should be appropriately laid down by smoothing it out from the center with the hands. First, joining the hands, one should bow to the Left Foot and the Guru, and meditate that they are granting power. Then, look toward the Right Foot and meditate upon Ganapati, the destroyer of obstacles. Then, meditate upon the chosen deity and the Power between the eyebrows. Once the kriyas begin, meditation is no longer necessary. Keep chanting the mantra received from the Guru. This mantra is conscious and provides power. The chanting of this mantra can also happen automatically. Relying on the mantra during kriyas is essential.

In the beginning, one should sit facing East or North. Thereafter, while the kriyas are happening, it does not matter even if this rule is broken, because sitting facing any direction leads to successful kriyas.

The kriyas are not identical for everyone. The kriyas of each individual manifest according to their past impressions, but the ultimate fruit of all of them is the attainment of Rajayoga. In the first stage, concentration of the mind occurs through asana, pranayama, mudras, bandhas, and dhyana. Gradually, the manifestation of all four—Mantrayoga, Layayoga, Hathayoga, and Rajayoga—takes place.

In spiritual practice, it is necessary to follow Yama (restraints) and Niyama (observances), and the remaining six limbs of Ashtanga Yoga occur automatically. In reality, the nature of the kriyas is such that the observance of Yama and Niyama also begins to be accomplished naturally, but one must remain constant in practicing them.

Experiencing visions directly or indirectly includes seeing women, boys, girls, the sun, moon, stars, different lights, a courtyard, a river, an ocean, a pond, a mountain, water, a cow, a horse, a lion or other animals, birds, a snake, trees, various flowers, fruits, loved ones, standard houses, a burning sensation in one's body, the spontaneous arising and acquisition of mantras other than the chosen ones, and visions of deities other than the chosen deity.

Regarding the actions or kriyas of the excellent or causal body, these involve bliss, absence of resolutions and doubts, inquiry into the peaceful element, contemplation on reality, devotion, skill in performing selfless action, and Brahman-knowledge.

If during the time of practice, the sounds of a dog, cat, or lion are uttered, or other words are spoken in a loud voice, or the loud sound of Om arises,

or laughing or crying occurs, one should not feel fear or shame due to them, nor should one stop them; otherwise, the full development of the power will not take place. Singing names like Rama-Krishna, corporate chanting, skill in singing, reciting hymns, etc., happening naturally is good. These should not be stopped.

If fear arises, do not be afraid, nor apprehend any misfortune from it. Keep only this belief that for your welfare, various types of fears or miracles are being displayed externally to instill firmness. At the time of fear, chant the chosen mantra and meditate upon the Guru.

When Mantrayoga manifests, the power of the mantra is experienced. If sleep comes while dropping into continuous mantra chanting, it should not be considered an obstacle. Upon waking, the automatic chanting of the mantra resumes.

The arrival of sleep during kriya is an extremely auspicious sign, but one should not sleep out of sheer laziness. Sleep arrives to remove the fatigue of the body and provides encouragement to the kriyas.

Water falling from the eyes, thumping in the chest, shivering in the body, and tremors are signs of the kriya. One should not harbor any bad expectations in the mind.

If pain, illness, or disease manifests in the body, it will subside automatically by continuing the kriya. Medicine should not be used. Poisonous or chemically strong medicines should never be used. Two reasons should be understood for the manifestation of disease—disturbance in diet and lifestyle, or the hidden presence of the said disease within the body. The kriya forces it to manifest and eliminates it. Occurrence of a cold or coughing out phlegm happens. Phlegm should not be swallowed, but if water comes into the mouth, it should not be spit out.

At the time of kriya, a loincloth or short undergarment must be worn. If the clothing is loose, there is an apprehension of obstacles occurring in the kriyas.

The urges of stool and urine must not be suppressed; even during practice, one should get up and relieve oneself.

Obstacles and Interferences

These variations become obstacles. Obstacles can be understood as threefold: those arising from physical and mental weaknesses, tests, and siddhis or supernatural powers. Sage Patanjali has described 9 internal obstacles, meaning blocks.

Vyadhi is disease due to the imbalance of bodily humors and fluids. Styan is incompetence, meaning the lack of inclination to work. Sanshay represents doubt, where various types of doubts arise, lack of faith in the power and the Guru occurs, and atheism creeps in. Pramada means negligence, seen as laxity in the efforts toward practices. Ahalasya is sloth, caused by Tamoguna or an unwholesome diet. Avirati is sensation-seeking, marked by the disconnection of the mind from yoga due to thirst for sensory objects. Bhrantidarshan is delusion, involving seeing and hearing absurd things, or erroneous perception such as seeing a snake in a rope. Aladhabhumikatva is the non-attainment of stages, showing a lack of progress despite making efforts. Anavasthitatva is instability, which is falling down after reaching a higher stage.

These are definitely internal obstacles, but it must be kept in mind that they manifest due to our physical and mental weaknesses, and they disappear upon the removal of those weaknesses. Until weaknesses are removed, permanent progress is impossible. As the body, prana, mind, and intellect become more organized, strong, and flawless, progressive advancement will continue to occur. Through these, the examination of the practitioner's capability also keeps happening, and divine tests also keep taking place; these too are in the form of obstacles.

But the kriyas bring to the surface all these weaknesses—lust, anger, greed, attachment, arrogance, jealousy, ego, fear, attachment, aversion, and all such demonic traits—and kill them by fighting against them. When this war begins, a great amount of courage, patience, and enthusiasm is needed by the practitioner, because at that time, agitation always remains in the mind, and anxiety persists due to the manifestation of demonic traits. This battle itself is a war of great bravery, but the true Guru in the form of Kundalini removes them one by one. Then, permanent peace manifests.

Siddhis or supernatural powers are also obstacles. One gets stuck by getting caught in them. In the Markandeya Purana, five such obstacles are

mentioned: Pratibha (Genius), Shravan (Hearing), Daiva (Divine visions), Bhrama (Delusion), and Avarta (Whirlpool).

The spontaneous revelation of poetry and the meanings of scriptures, or acquiring various types of temporary knowledge, is the Pratibha obstacle. Understanding the meaning of unknown words or hearing sounds from miles away is the Shravan obstacle. When a yogi sees everywhere or things begin to appear clearly, that is the Daiva obstacle. When everything appears free of delusion through the mind, that is the Bhrama obstacle. When the mind gets agitated and becomes bewildered, it is called the Avarta obstacle. For the peace of these obstacles, a remedy has been stated: by maintaining a steady attitude, they become quiet.

Conclusion and Practical Advice

By meditation and by surrendering to God, obstacles are destroyed. The desire to express experiences is also an obstacle. Even if visions occur in a dream, they should not be revealed. Doubts must be removed only by asking the Guru or experienced practitioners of the kriya.

One should not consider oneself successful merely by receiving the power. An excellent, mediocre, inferior, or low-grade entitled practitioner requires a minimum practice of 3 years, 6 years, 9 years, and 12 years respectively. One must continue to practice constantly with devotion, respect, and patience, and must keep reading, reflecting, and profoundly meditating upon the scriptures of Yoga and Vedanta. One should not wander here and there caught up in others' yoga claims. Writing down one's daily states and experiences in a diary provides great benefit. Reading them when enthusiasm is low increases patience and strength.

Om Tatsat. Om Shanti Shanti Shanti.